# DIMENSIONS

## A Casebook of Alien Contact

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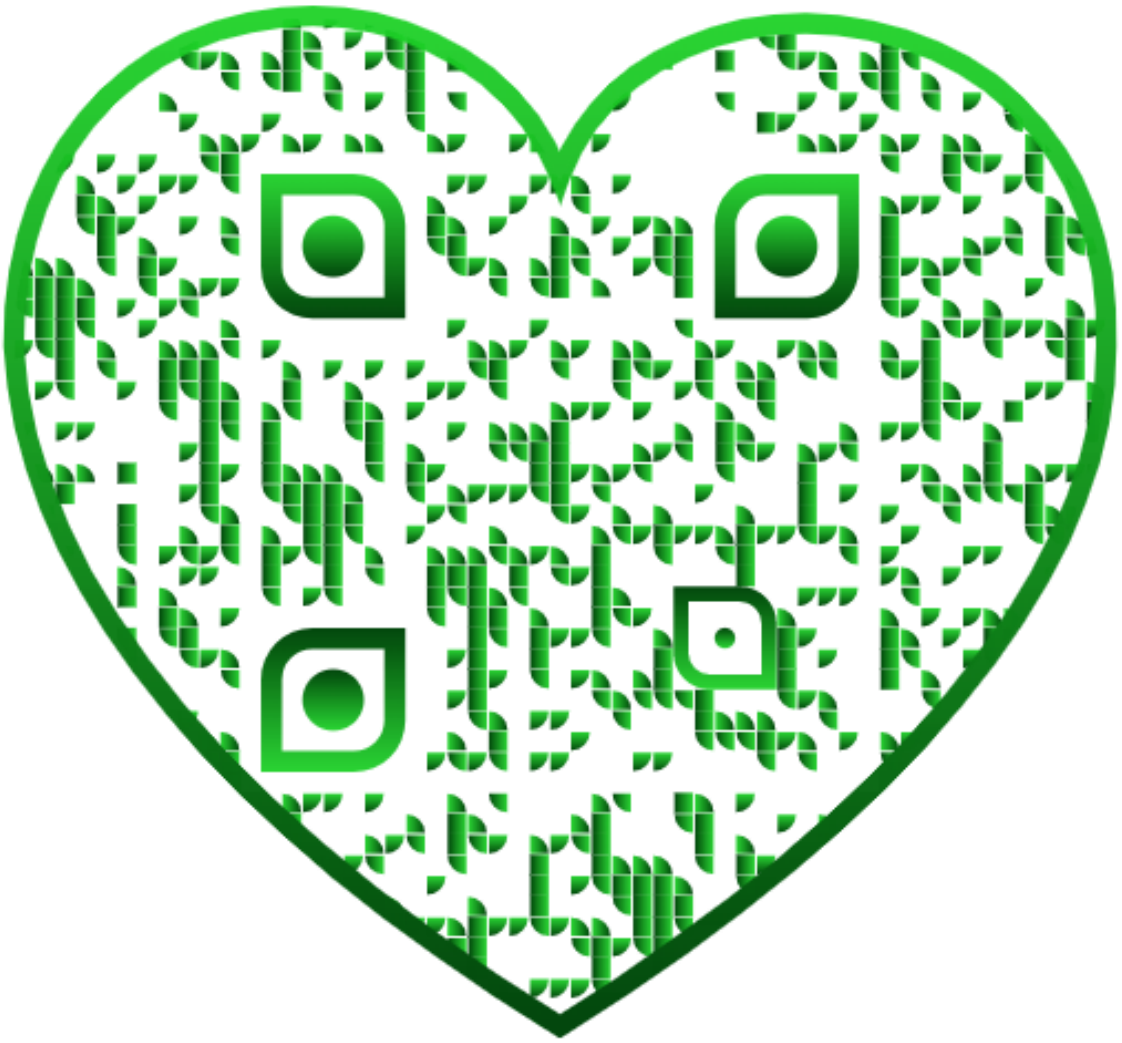
Foreword by Whitley Strieber



# Dimensions: A Casebook of Alien Contact

by

**Jacques Vallee**

## Foreword by Whitley Strieber

There are two things about the UFO controversy that make it uniquely interesting. The first is that it is probably the deepest mystery that mankind has ever encountered. The second is that it has been the object of so much denial despite the fact that it is certainly a real phenomenon.

At the very least it is a social issue of the utmost importance, because it has all the potential of a truly powerful idea to enter unconscious mythology and there to generate beliefs so broad in their scope and deep in their impact that they emerge with religious implications for the surrounding culture.

The only thing now needed to make the UFO myth a new religion of remarkable scope and force is a single undeniable sighting. Such a sighting need last only a few minutes – just long enough to be thoroughly documented. It will at once invest the extraterrestrials channels, the "space brothers" believers, and the UFO cultists with the appearance of revealed truth.

This unfortunate state of affairs has come about for one reason, and one reason only. Our best intellects have methodically ignored the issue of UFOs for half a century, and have thus left the public without recourse in making sense of the incredibly subtle and complex experience of sighting them and interacting with their inhabitants.

There are two reasons that the scientific community has been unable to address the issue sensibly. The first is that the phenomenon is so elusive that it cannot be easily measured. The UFO occupants – if there are any – cannot be studied or even engaged in dialogue, and their machines are only rarely seen by trained observers who are also willing to make their observations known to their colleagues. The second is, simply fear. Any explanation of the phenomenon that is now prosaic must inevitably lead to a profound challenge to cherished theories about the nature of mind and universe and man's place in the cosmos.

If we come to a correct understanding of the UFO phenomenon, we may well in the process destroy the whole basis of our present beliefs about reality. Sensing this on an almost instinctive level, scientists hide behind the facile posturing of self-styled "debunkers" who can be counted on to distort or

suppress unsettling data in order to leave our current ideas intact.

The public is left – as I was left – facing the visitors in the middle of the night without any notion of what they are, where they came from, or how to act in their presence.

Absent any genuine understanding of the phenomenon, one is forced to accept that it is what it appears to be. As Dr. Vallee points out in this masterful and ground-breaking analysis, that is exactly what we should not be doing.

He places this modern UFO experience firmly in its historical context as the latest manifestation of a phenomenon that goes back at least as far as recorded history. Thus, at a stroke, he redefines it as a part of the fundamental mythology of human experience and enables us, for the first time, to begin to raise questions about it of sufficient depth and resonance to be meaningful.

In the process he takes us on a grand journey through the annals of strange and anomalous human experience. He reveals an appalling truth: the phenomenon has been with us throughout history – and never, in all of that time, have we been able to deal sensibly with it. Whatever it is, it changes with our ability to perceive it. The fifteenth century saw the visitors as fairies. The tenth century saw them as sylphs. The Romans saw them as wood-nymphs and sprites. And so it goes, back into time.

One of the thousands of people who wrote me concerning my book Communion had this fascinating insight: "Whatever cosmology or mythology I was immersed in seemed to be the factor for shaping the context and attendant imagery of my experiences, which I believe are essentially of an abstract nature."

And yet I myself have faced physical beings. The context of my own experience, with extensive witness by others, makes it clear that the phenomenon can emerge as an entirely real, physical presence that is quite capable of manipulating its environment. The next moment, though, it can evaporate into thin air, leaving not a trace of what was a moment before an immense and overwhelmingly real presence.

How could this be? It is no wonder that we have never been able to ask

satisfactory questions about the phenomenon. I have even thought that it may simply be what the force of evolution looks like when it acts upon conscious creatures. After all, our entire five-thousand-year history is but a moment in the life of our species, less than an instant in the evolution of the universe. It may be that our history is in its entirety one of those magnificent explosions of evolutionary force that suddenly change everything – effectively equivalent to the "moment" when Cro-Magnon man burst on the scene or the much longer "moment" when the dinosaurs disappeared.

And the visitors – a dark and highly active phenomenon that seems to inhabit cracks in the unconscious, cracks in spacetime, and cracks in history – are somewhere close to the essence of what is happening. Dr. Vallee elucidates the basis of what must surely become a new vision of the UFO phenomenon, one that will sweep aside the various levels of illusion behind which it hides.

Dr. Vallee argues that the force that now appears in the form of UFOs and attendant manifestations has emerged into history many times, operating as a sort of control mechanism that has altered and shaped human affairs, often profoundly.

He demonstrates, for example, that the miracle of Fatima was a sort of hybrid appearing in part as a religious phenomenon and in part as a classic UFO encounter. One is left to wonder if there might not have been a very real technology behind the miracles and apparitions that have done so much to influence the growth of our cultures. Indeed, viewed from this perspective, it can be vigorously argued that most major religions have emerged out of visionary experiences that are, in fact, understandable in the setting of the UFO encounter. Thus the phenomenon becomes not simply one of a group of things that influence the evolution of culture, but rather a primary engine.

It could very well be the single most important influence on our history. And it is arguably more active now on a global scale than it has ever been before.

This should tell us something about the importance of this moment in history, and should suggest to us that the time to come to a clear and correct understanding of the phenomenon is now.

The longer we remain ignorant of it, the more we guarantee that it will retain

its power over us. It is time to appraoch this phenomenon with all of the clarity of mind that it deserves. Dr. Vallee, it seems to me, has taken a dramatically important step in this direction.

# Introduction: Closed Minds, Open Questions

A mystery that has lingered in human imagination for many years, the mystery of unidentified flying objects and their occupants, is coming back to the front pages of our newspapers with a parade of new claims: not only are these objects seen in the sky and on the ground, but they are said to have contacted humans and, in some cases, abducted them. The public has reacted to these stories with a mixture of skepticism, awe, and fear. The lack of reliable data and the absence of serious research are intensifying this concern.

Therefore the time has come to reexamine the UFO phenomenon and to reopen the archives that deal with that ancient dream of our civilization, of every civilization: contact with alien beings.

Each culture has sought to assemble this puzzle in its own way, and each culture has contributed something to the great pool of legends, folklore, and traditions that link human imagination with the heavens. Today the rapid pace of technology precipitates a new awareness of the importance of the problem. The modern reader needs a new perspective, a new paradigm in which fear can be set aside and knowledge can prevail. Above all, he needs more facts.

In an effort to help answer this need, the present book represents the distillation of some twenty-five years of research. It gathers and updates some previously published material into a new, more manageable collection of the most significant events that have marked the rich history of the UFO phenomenon. And it leads to a new conclusion: Although I am among those who believe that UFOs are real physical objects. I do not think they are extraterrestrial in the ordinary sense of the term. In my view they present an exciting challenge to our concept of reality itself.

It is sad that, as the twentieth century draws to an end and as new discoveries become possible, the minds of many scientists remain closed to this problem. In its June 1987 issue the popular astrology magazine Sky & Telescope noted with sneering, fashionable skepticism that: Unidentified Flying Objects have faded from popularity in recent years, perhaps as the news media become more aware how little is behind every UFO tale that has ever been well investigated.

Ironically, during the same month, two books climbed the popularity charts to the top of the New York Times bestseller list. Communion and Intruders contained sensational first-person accounts of encounters with UFOs and confrontation or spiritual contact with their alleged occupants.

This coincidence between scientific arrogance and a new social trend illustrates an important fact in our society: while science consistently refuses to consider phenomena that lie outside the safe regions of its current understanding, the public is eagerly reaching for explanations that fit its experience.

While our scientists remain unaware of important data that could stimulate new theories of the universe, the rest of us miss an opportunity to make serious progress in what should be an important spiritual quest.

This book is an attempt to close the gap be examining the evidence for the existence of UFOs, not only in our time, but in earlier ages as well.

Such a historical perspective, which is summarized in Part One under "The Alien Chronicles," is entertaining and often captivating. But more importantly, it is critical to a full understanding of the problem. If these objects have been seen from time immemorial, as I will show, and if their occupants have always performed similar actions along similar lines of behavior, then it is not reasonable to assume that they are "simply" extraterrestrial visitors. They must be something more.

Perhaps they have always been here. On earth. With us.

In my view, the widespread belief among researchers of the field in the literal truth of the "abductions" is only a very crude approximation of a much more complex tapestry. Another reality is involved here. A reality characterized by cosmic seduction, strange signs in heaven, and paranormal events that present a rich panoply of psychic phenomena. Part Two is devoted to its analysis, paving the way for Part Three, which I have called "A Challenge to Research," for we can no longer avoid seriously studying UFO phenomena.

For a long time, the U.S. military has dismissed the problem because "it did not show any hostile intent and did not threaten national security." This

argument is no longer tenable.

At a time when our government is proposing to deploy the Strategic Defense Initiative, commonly known as the "Star Wars" system, in space, how long can we tolerate an unexplained phenomenon in the upper atmosphere? UFOs, whatever they are, remain visible to the naked eye and detectable by reconnaissance satellites, electronic sensors, and radar. A future wave of unidentified objects similar to those that were recorded in 1952, 1954, 1966, or 1973 could trigger the SDI network and augment the risk of starting the next world war accidentally. It could even mask a real attack. This possibility is not acceptable in terms of our national security, even if these objects are not hostile. It is equally unacceptable to any of the advanced nations.

It can be argued that UFO phenomena are so complex and so far beyond our ability to classify them that no solution can be expected for a long time to come. This is a point well taken, but it should not discourage us from doing active research. Even if we never understand the whole phenomenon, there still may be useful lessons to learn from its smaller components. I would be very happy, for instance, to simply understand how these objects manipulate electromagnetic waves to create retractable light beams with gravity effects capable of pulling objects, people, and animals through the air; or to understand how they paralyze witnesses who come close to them.

Imagine a primitive bushman watching a Boeing 747 land. He has no chance, from this single occurrence, of understanding the intricate technology that controls the aircraft's powered flight. But a good look at the landing gear could well inspire a smart savage to invent the wheel!

Such is our position with respect to UFOs. Are they real? Why do they seem to violate the principles of our physics? And why are they interacting with us? While the minds of many scientists are closed to the unknown, a few of us believe that these questions are very much open. They provide one of the most exciting challenges ever presented to science, to our collective imagination, to human reason.

I do not have the answer to the mystery, but I do have a great deal of relevant data. Much progress has been made in the last several years, and in my own work I have come to think of the UFO problem in terms of three distinct levels.

The first level is physical. We now know that the UFO behaves like a region of space, of small dimensions (about ten meters), within which a very large amount of energy is stored. This energy is manifested by pulsed light phenomena of intense colors and by other forms of electromagnetic radiation.

The second level is biological. Reports of UFOs show all kinds of psychophysiological effects on the witnesses. Exposure to the phenomenon causes visions, hallucinations, space and time disorientation, physiological reactions (including temporary blindness, paralysis, sleep cycle changes), and long-term personality changes.

The third level is social. Belief in the reality of UFOs is spreading rapidly at all levels of society throughout the world. Books on the subject continue to accumulate. Documentaries and major films are being made by men and women who grew up with flying-saucer stories. Expectations about life in the universe have been revolutionized. Many modern themes in our culture can be traced back to the "messages from space" coming from UFO contactees of the forties and fifties.

The experience of a close encounter with a UFO is a shattering physical and mental ordeal. The trauma has effects that go far beyond what the witnesses recall consciously. New types of behavior are conditioned, and new types of beliefs are promoted. Aside from any scientific consideration, the social, political, and religious consequences of the experience are enormous if they are considered over the timespan of a generation.

Faced with the new wave of experiences of UFO contact that are described in books like Communion and Intruders and in movies like Close Encounters of the Third Kind, our religions seem obsolete. Our idea of the church as a social entity working within rational structures is obviously challenged by the claim of a direct communication in modern times with visible beings who seem endowed with supernatural powers.

This idea can shake our society to the very roots of its culture. Witnesses are no longer afraid to come forward with personal stories of abductions, of spiritual exchanges with aliens, even of sexual interaction with them. Such reports are folklore in the making. I have discovered that they form a striking parallel to the tales of meetings with elves and jinn of medieval times, with the

denizens of "Magonia," the land beyond the clouds of ancient chronicles. But they are something else, too: a portent of important things to come.

Today there are many reasons for expecting a change in attitudes toward alien intelligence. Our national scientific effort has temporarily run out of objectives that can capture the public's imagination and enthusiasm. The eager anticipation of encounters with other intelligent beings would help in transcending local conflicts on this earth and in achieving within a single generation behavioral changes that might otherwise take hundreds of years to complete. If this is the contribution of the UFO phenomenon, then we are in fact dealing with one of history's major transitions.

# PART ONE: THE ALIEN CHRONICLES

In the last analysis magic, religion and science are nothing but theories of thought; and as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter be itself superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena – of registering the shadows on the screen – of which we in this generation can form no idea.

Sir James Frazer, O.M. The Golden Bough

It has become impossible to listen to the radio or watch television without being exposed to testimony about encounters with strange aerial objects and their alleged pilots. While many of these claims seem ludicrous, and some fit easily within the scope of psychopathology, a genuine sincerity shines through most of the stories. Unless one assumes that the world is forever restricted to the normal phenomena already known to science, it is difficult to deny that the witnesses have been exposed to a deep, unusual, and even terrifying event, and that it involves a form of intelligence we have not yet recognized.

The temptation is great, at this point, to jump to the first conclusions that come to mind. It is annoying to be confronted with something unexplainable, especially when it is threatening and questions everything we have been taught about the nature of the universe. So we grasp at straws.

Perhaps, we fantasize, we are being visited by beings from another planet. Perhaps our government will soon reveal that some of our scientists know about "them" and can explain their motivation.

Perhaps everything will be all right.

Those of us who have studied this phenomenon for a long time (in my case, since the intense waves of sighting of the fifties in Europe) have learned to resist the temptation to jump to premature conclusions. If there was ever a situation in science that called for the careful sifting and screening of data and for questioning and testing of every hypothesis, it is the situation presented by the UFO phenomenon.

Readers of my previous books know that for the past twenty-five years I have advocated a serious, long-term inquiry into the phenomenon. I consider the rich experiences presented by the witnesses as an opportunity to do some good science and, even more importantly, to combine the efforts of several sciences to explore an area of nature that is still a mystery. But I have carefully kept my distance from the very vocal groups of researchers who claim that UFOs are interplanetary visitors; such a conclusion is not only premature but is contradicted by several basic facts that become apparent only when one takes a historical perspective of the field rather than studying a single case at a time and trying to generalize from isolated events.

Part One of this book establishes such a perspective for the reader who may have been exposed only to recent cases and is not aware that the phenomenon has been with us throughout recorded history – not only in the form of signs in the sky, but also with a rich array of reports of contact with strange beings on earth and even of abductions.

We are only beginning to relate modern observations of UFOs to some of the ideas that have shaped our folklore, our religions, and our philosophies. It will take many years to reconstruct the links in the chain of personal experiences and speculations that connect the vision of Ezekiel in biblical times with the puzzling, moving, and often terrifying accounts of our contemporaries. But is is not too early to begin.

# 1. Ancient Encounters

Let us start with a simple fact: man has always been aware that he is not alone. All the traditions of mankind carefully preserve accounts of contact with other forms of life and intelligence beyond the animal realm. Even more significantly, they claim that we are surrounded with spiritual entities that can manifest physically in ways that we do not understand. This chapter summarizes some of these traditions and draws a close parallel between the ancient accounts and modern cases of contact with similar entities.

I started work on this book during a business trip to Paris. A few hours of free time between two meetings gave me the opportunity to pay a visit to one of the most extraordinary artistic achievements of all times, the Sainte Chapelle, which is located inside the Palace of Justice, a block away from Notre Dame. It is an incredible feeling, one which can only be compared to a trip within a jewel or, rather, an entire treasure chest of jewels. There is almost nothing inside the chapel itself: a few sculptures, painted wood. But the walls are made of stained glass, and the various lights of Paris shine through to create a mood, a perception, which is totally alien to the rest of human experience.

One of the stained-glass panels of the Sainte Chapelle shows the abduction of the prophet Ezekiel by an object that came as a whirlwind. He saw wheels within wheels and four strange creatures. He was carried away to a remote mountaintop, where he found himself in a state of wonder and confusion.

In my many years of UFO investigations, I have spoken to numerous witnesses – people I could hear and touch and look straight in the eye – who told me they had been caught in a whirlwind, had seen strange creatures, and had been left wondering and confused. They looked to me to dispel their confusion. All I could offer them was the assurance that they were not alone, that many others shared the same experience, and that I believed future science would eventually accept and understand it as an important source of new knowledge.

The people I interviewed would not someday be represented as stained-glass figures in the chapels where kings and queens bend their knees and bow their heads in worship. They were ordinary people with all the hopes and

weaknesses of human beings. But their stories, nonetheless, are worth listening to.

## The Abduction Experience

My first meeting with the woman I shall call Helen [Out of concern for the privacy of the witnesses mentioned in this book, their names have been changed unless they had already been published in the media.] took place after she called to tell me about a particular motor she wanted to build. Tall and fashionably dressed, she could have been a model or an executive secretary behind a big desk.

Instead, she told me she was bent on solving the energy crisis by building a new type of engine.

During our interview, Helen confessed that the motor idea was triggered by an abduction aboard a UFO. It seems that she had seen the UFO with a group of musicians coming back from Lompoc, California, to Los Angeles in the summer of 1968.

"We left after the last performance on that weekend," she told me. "We probably packed up the gear by 2:15 A.M. We must have been on the road half an hour to forty-five minutes, it might even have been an hour. At that point, we were on a flat stretch of land. There were hills on the right-hand side, and we were going south. Out of these hills came a white light, and it moved up and began to come in our direction. An airplane couldn't have turned the way it did, so we figured it was a helicopter. Then it began to do very erratic things and twists, go very far out and come closer very quickly."

I interrupted her to slow down her excited recollection of that episode. I wanted to get the step-by-step account of her perceptions. "How did you all react to this?" I asked. "What did the others see?"

Her reply was forceful: "All four of us were very aware of it," she said immediately. "We talked a lot about it, but nobody said 'Let's hide' or anything like that. George and Barbara were up front – George was driving – I was in the back behind him, and Dave was to my right. Dave and Barbara were afraid of it. George and I were encouraging the whole thing; we enjoyed this."

All right, so they could have been watching a helicopter. "What did the object do?"

"It came up over the car and in front of us, maybe 100 to 200 feet above ground, and it was, I would say, about six lanes of the freeway in width. It was white, and it showed a very beautiful kind of glow. I seem to remember some kind of windows, but I really couldn't be sure. It didn't make any noise. The thing was big. Four white lights, funnel-shaped, extended from the perimeter of the vehicle and down around each of our bodies." She looked up and shuddered as if it were there, still hovering right above us.

"What kind of feeling did you have then?"

"I remember leaving my body on the seat of the car and being about three or four feet out of the car," she said in a matter-of-fact way. "All four of us did the same thing; off we went! At that point I don't remember anything else, and until fairly recently I didn't think there was anything else. Then I began to realize that something might have happened, because the next thing I remember I was coming back into the car. I looked around and saw the light shimmer around Barbara and Dave, and we were slowly dissipated back into our bodies."

I had trouble visualizing the scene. Astral travel is nothing new. That's how witches allegedly went to the Sabbath and saints to heavenly communion. An American businessman and psychic experimenter, Robert Monroe, has set up learning centers complete with training tapes to help people leave their bodies. The psychedelic culture embraced the same concept enthusiastically in the sixties. Perhaps any living entity can transfer its consciousness outside its own body. But automobiles have no consciousness and are not capable of astral travel.

"What happened to the car?" I asked her.

"The vehicle stayed with us at that time and then began to move off a little bit in the distance, and the car was just going on its own velocity. That was the initial experience of it."

At her request I arranged for Helen to undergo a very mild form of hypnotic regression. During that session, she remembered going on board the "saucer"

and observing its propulsion mechanism. She met a man dressed in white, who showed her the amazing motor she is now determined to build.

I began checking her story. First, I had a lengthy telephone conversation with George, who hasn't seen Helen in several years but remembers the incident as "a turning point in [his] life." Dave has moved to another city, where I traced him. A friend of mine, a psychiatrist, got in touch with him and obtained his statement. Like George, he vividly recalls the whole incident and describes it in similar terms.

Ever since the sighting, Helen has felt the urge to build the machine whose principle was revealed to her by one of the saucer pilots. It has become a central point for her, the goal of her entire life.

Yet the motor she wants to build could never run, physically, at least in the way she explains it.

There are four witnesses to this UFO event, and everything seems to point to the reality of their experience. But this is precisely the place where many questions are raised in my mind.

Consider the story from the point of view of the "spacecraft" theory. Should we agree with most UFO believers that what Helen saw was a vehicle from another planet, coming here for exploration?

On the surface, this interpretation seems to fit the facts.

But what about the paranormal effects? Can we ignore Helen's testimony that she was "teleported" into the UFO? Can we ignore the "absurdity" that characterized the entire episode? How does it fit with the spacecraft idea?

The "meeting" aboard the craft makes no sense if we assume the man in white was a visitor from a distant star. Why would such visitors look like us? Why would they show us a motor that does not have an objective physical function, a motor we cannot build? These are some of the questions to which we will return again and again in the course of this book.

Some abduction reports are even more extraordinary. In 1985 a woman named

Kathy told researcher Budd Hopkins that she had found herself taken inside an object, in a place that was entirely white, with small gray beings who looked humanoid. Under hypnosis Kathy recalled something like a medical examination. In his book Intruders, Hopkins proposes a scenario in which UFO occupants had timed their visit at the appropriate day of the month to remove an ovum from Kathy, keeping her in a "quasi-anesthetized" state during the procedure.

Kathy had discovered she was pregnant in early 1978; she was then nineteen years old. The date of her wedding, which had been planned for late spring, was moved up to April. Pregnancy was confirmed by her doctors. Yet she had a normal period in March. When new tests confirmed she was no longer pregnant, she cried and found herself repeating, "They took my baby." Under hypnosis in 1985, according to Hopkins, Kathy recalled beings touching her, immobilizing her, and performing some sort of operation on her.

In other accounts abductees of both sexes have described having intercourse with aliens. Many researchers speculate that such accounts prove that intruders from space are experimenting with human genetics, but they fail to point out that these modern stories are consistent with perplexing accounts that come to us from earlier times, from the oldest records we have.

The Age of the Gods

It is in the literature of religion that flying objects from celestial countries are most commonly described, along with the organization, nature, and philosophy of their occupants. Indeed, several writers have consistently pointed out that the fundamental texts of every religion refer to the contact of the human community with a "superior race" of beings from the sky. This terminology is used, in particular, in the Bible, where it is said:

They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

The visitors have the power to fly through the air using luminous craft, sometimes called "celestial chariots." With these manifestations are associated impressive physical and meteorological displays, which the ancient authors call "whirlwind," "pillar of fire," etc. The occupants of these craft, to whom

popular imagery will later ascribe wings and luminosity, are similar to man and communicate with him. They are organized under a strict military system: The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them...

These traditions are not restricted to Egypt, Israel and Mesopotamia. During the period of the early history of Japan ending about 3000 B.C. called the Jomon Era, an important artistic activity was the making of earthen statues. At first, these statues were small and very simple. They were made to represent human beings. But in the middle of the period, the artists started to make larger statues showing standard features of a drastically different design: large chests, arc-shaped legs, very short arms, and large heads apparently covered with complete helmets. These statues seem to depict precisely the same "occupants" similar to those seen aboard UFOs by modern witnesses.

On the nature of the helmets archaeologists disagree. In 1924, because he thought that its expression looked like that found on a wooden mask made in Africa, Dr. Gento Hasebe proposed that the headgear was in reality a mourning mask used at burials. In the Tohoku area of northern Japan, however, some of the most elaborate statues of this kind show something like a pair of sunglasses: huge eyes with an insect-like horizontal slit – a truly remarkable design. Supposedly, the statues of the later part of the Jomon Era were first made with earth, then copied on rock or soft stone. Those found in Lomoukai, Nambu province, are carved in rock and show helmets. One of them, a Jomon Dogu dated 4300 B.C. and excavated at the Amadaki ruins in the Iwate perfecture, shows details of the front part of the helmet, with a round opening at the base of the nose, below what appears to be a large perforated plate.

The resemblance of the Dogu statues to many descriptions of occupants is the relevant factor here.

It has led some students of the Jomon Era to speculate that the statues might indicate the distant memory of visitors from elsewhere. The headgear with its filter, the large goggles, the necks with wide collars, and the onepiece suits are certainly intriguing.

Sorcerers from the Clouds

It is a common belief that the term flying saucer was "made in America." Was it not coined by an American businessman in 1947? Was not the first official investigation of the mystery by military authorities started in the United States a few weeks later?

Well, yes. But a farmer from Texas described a dark flying object as a "large saucer" as early as January 1878, and ancient Japanese records inform us that on October 27, 1180, an unusual luminous object described as an "earthenware vessel" flew from a mountain in the Kii province beyond the northeast mountain of Fukuhara at midnight. After a while, the object changed its course and was lost to sight at the southern horizon, leaving a luminous trail.

"In view of the time which has elapsed since the sighting" – as U.S. Air Force investigators like to say – it would be difficult to obtain additional data today. It is interesting, however, to find a medieval Japanese chronicler speaking of flying earthenware.

The Japanese must also recieve credit for having organized the first official investigation. The story is so amusing, and parallels so well the modern-day activities of the U.S. Air Force, that I cannot resist reproducing it here.

The date was September 24, 1235, seven centuries before our time, and General Yoritsume was camping with his army. Suddenly, a curious phenomenon was observed: mysterious sources of light were seen to swing and circle in the southwest, moving in loops until the early morning. General Yoritsume ordered what we would now term a "full-scale scientific investigation," and his consultants set to work. Soon they made their report. "The whole thing is completely natural, General," they said in substance. "It is only the wind making the stars sway." My source of information for this report, Yusuke J. Matsumura of Yokohama, adds sadly: "Scholars on government pay are always making ambiguous statements like that!"

Celestial phenomena seem to have been so commonplace in the Japanese skies during the Middle Ages that they directly influenced human events. Panic, riots, and disruptive social movements were often linked to celestial apparitions. The Japanese peasants had the disagreeable tendency to interpret any "signs from heaven" as strong indications that their revolts and demands against the feudal system or against foreign invaders were just, and as assurance that their

rebellions would be crowned with success. Numerous examples of such situations can be quoted. For instance, on September 12, 1271, the famous priest Nichiren was about to be beheaded at Tatsunokuchi, Kamakura, when there appeared in the sky an object like a full moon, shiny and bright. The officials panicked and the execution was not carried out.

On August 3, 989, during a period of great social unrest, three round objects of unusual brilliance were observed; later they joined together. In 1361, a flying object described as being "shaped like a drum, about twenty feet in diameter" emerged from the inland sea off western Japan. On January 2, 1458, a bright object resembling the full moon was seen in the sky, and this apparition was followed by "curious signs" in heaven and on earth. People were "amazed." Two months later, on March 17, 1458, five stars appeared, circling the moon. They changed color three times and vanished suddenly. The rulers were distressed and believed that the sign announced a great disturbance throughout the land. All the people in Kyoto were expecting disasters to follow, and the emperor himself was very upset. Ten years later, on March 8, 1468, a dark object, which made a "sound like a wheel," flew from Mt. Kasuga toward the west at midnight. The combination of the sound and the darkness of the flying object is difficult to explain in natural terms.

On January 3, 1569, in the evening, a flaming star appeared in the sky. It was regarded as an omen of serious changes, announcing the fall of the Chu Dynasty. Such phenomena continued during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For instance, in May1606, fireballs were continuously reported over Kyoto, and one night a whirling ball of fire resembling a red wheel hovered near the Nijo Castle and was observed by many of the samurai. The next morning the city was filled with rumors and the people again muttered: "This must be a portent."

Beginning one noon in September 1702, the sun took on a bloody color several days in succession and cotton-like threads fell down, apparently falling from the sun itself – phenomena reminiscent of the 1917 "miraculous" observations in Fatima, Portugal.

Chaos spread all over Japan on January 2, 1749, when three round objects "like the moon" appeared and were seen for four days. Such a state of social unrest developed, and seemed so clearly linked with the mysterious "celestial

objects," that the government decided to act. Riot participants were executed. But confusion became total when people observed three "moons" aligned in the sky and, several days later, two "suns."

Undoubtedly, the Japanese may have experienced some natural phenomena similar to mirages and incorrectly interpreted them in the context of social rebellion. From this distance, however, it is impossible to separate the reliable observations from the emotional interpretation. What matters here is the link between certain unusual phenomena – observed or imagined – and the witnesses' behavior. These accounts show that it is possible to affect the lives of many people by showing them displays that are beyond their comprehension.

A brief examination of legendary elements in Western Europe in the Middle Ages will show that a similar rumor about strange flying objects and supernatural manifestations was spreading there.

Indeed, Pierre Boaistuau, in 1575, remarked:

The face of heaven has been so often disfigured by bearded, hairy comets, torches, flames, columns, spears, shields, dragons, duplicate moons, suns, and other similar things, that if one wanted to tell in an ordenly fashion those that have happened since the birth of Jesus Christ only, and inquire about the causes of their origin, the lifetime of a single man would not be enough.

According to the 1594 edition of the same book, this is what happened a few miles from Tübingen, Germany, on December 5, 1577, at 7:00 A.M.:

About the sun many dark clouds appeared, such as we are wont to see during great storms: and soon afterward have come from the sun other clouds, all fiery and bloody, and others, yellow as saffron. Out of these clouds have come forth reverberations resembling large, tall and wide hats, and the earth showed itself yellow and bloody, and seemed to be covered with hats, tall and wide, which appeared in various colors such as red, blue, green, and most of them black.

Especially interesting to us will be the fact that these reports of celestial objects are linked with claims of contact with strange creatures, a situation parallel to that of modern-day UFO landings.

Since these rumors have been puzzling to many authorities in the Roman Catholic Church, perhaps it is appropriate to begin with a quotation from the life of St. Anthony, the Egyptian-born founder of Christian monasticism who lived about 30 A.D. In the desert, St. Anthony met with a strange being of small stature, who fled after a brief conversation with him: Before long in a small rocky valley shut in on all sides he sees a manikin with hooded snout, horned forehead, and extremities like goat's feet. When he saw this, Anthony like a good soldier seized the shield of faith and the helmet of hope: the creature none the less began to offer him the fruit of the palm tree to support him on his journey and as it were pledges of peace. Anthony perceiving this stopped and asked who he was. The answer he recieved from him was this:

"I am a mortal being and one of the inhabitants of the Desert whom the Gentiles deluded by various forms of error worship under the names of Fauns, Satyrs and Incubi. I am sent to represent my tribe. We pray you in our behalf to entreat the favour of your Lord and ours, who, we have learnt, came once to save the world, and 'whose sound has gone forth into all the earth.'"

As he uttered such words as these, the aged traveller's cheeks streamed with tears, the marks of his deep feeling, which he shed in the fulness of his joy. He rejoiced over the Glory of Christ and the destruction of Satan, and marvelling all the while that he could understand the Satyr's language, and striking the ground with his staff, he said, "Woe to thee, Alexandria!" he exclaimed, "Beasts speak of Christ, and you instead of God worship monsters."

He had not finished speaking when, as if on wings, the wild creature fled away.

Let no one scruple to believe this incident; its truth is supported by what took place when Constantine was on the throne, a matter of which the whole world was witness. For a man of that kind was brought alive to Alexandria and shown as a wonderful sight to the people.

Afterwards his lifeless body, to prevent its decay through the summer heat, was preserved in salt and brought to Antioch that the Emperor might see it.

Again, with this story, we are faced with an account the truthfulness of which it would be futile to question: the lives of the early saints are full of miracles that

should be taken literary figures rather than as scientific observations. The important point is that basic religious texts contain such material, giving, so to speak, letters of nobility to a category of beings widely believed to be of supernatural origin. Such observations as St. Anthony's prove fundamental when religious authorities are faced with the problem of evaluating medieval observations of beings from the sky, claims of evocation of demons by occult means, and modern miracles.

The details and the terminology of observation are not important to us. It is enough to note that the strange being is indifferently termed a satyr and a manikin, while the saint himself states that the Gentiles also use the names faun and incubus. St. Jerome speaks of a "man of that kind."

Throughout our study of these legends, we shall find the same confusion. In the above account, however, it is at least clear to St. Anthony that the creature is neither an angel nor a demon. If it had been, he would have recognized it immediately!

In the twenty-century-old Indian book of primitive astronomy Surya Siddhanta, it is said that: "Below the moon and above the clouds revolve the Siddhas (perfected men) and the Vidyaharas (possessors of knowledge)." According to Australian writer Andrew Tomas, Indian tradition holds that the Siddhas could become "very heavy at will or as light as a feather, travel through space and disappear from sight."

Observations of beings who flew across the sky and landed are also found in the writings of Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, France. Agobard, who was born in Spain in 779 and came to France when three years old, became archbishop at thirty-seven. When he died in 840, "one of the most celebrated and learned prelates of the ninth century," he left an interesting account of a peculiarly significant incident:

We have seen and heard men plunged in such great stupidity, sunk in such depths of folly, as to believe that there is a certain region, which they call Magonia [Italics within quotations indicate my emphasis.], whence ships sail in the clouds, in order to carry back to that region those fruits of the earth which are destroyed by hail and tempests; the sailors paying rewards to the storm wizards and themselves receiving corn and other produce. Out of the

number of those whose blind folly was deep enough to allow them to believe these things possible, I saw several exhibitions in a certain concourse of people, four persons in bonds – three men and a woman who they said had fallen from these same ships; after keeping them for some days in captivity they had brought them before the assembled multitude, as we have said, in our presence to be stoned. But truth prevailed.

We will see that the occultists give a quite different interpretation to the same incident.

The Seven Visitors of Facius Cardan

Throughout medieval times, a major current of thought distinct from official religion existed, culminating in the works of the alchemists and hermetists. Among such groups were some of the early scientists and men remarkable for the strength of their independent thinking and for their adventurous lives, such as Paracelsus. The nature of the mysterious beings dressed in shiny garments or covered with dark hair intrigued these men intensely. They were the first to relate these strange beings to the creatures described in the Bible and in the writings of the early cabalists.

According to biblical writers, the heavenly hierarchy includes beings of human form called cherubim, a name that in Hebrew means "full of knowledge." Ezekiel describes them in the following terms:

Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Are the mysterious creatures who fly through the sky and land in their "cloudships" – Agobard's authority notwithstanding – of the same race as the angels? asked the old philosophers. No, because they are mortal. A book entitled Entretiens sur les sciences secrétes notes: The Hebrews used to call these beings who are between the Angels and Man Sadaim, and the Greeks, transposing the letters and adding but one syllable, called them Daimonas.

Among the ancient Philosophers these demons were held to be an Aerial Race, ruling over the Elements, mortal, engendering, and unknown in this century to

those who rarely seek Truth in her ancient dwelling place, which is to say, in the Cabala and in the theology of the Hebrews, who possessed the special art of holding communion with that Aerial People and of conversing with all these Inhabitants of the Air.

Plutarch even had a complete theory on the nature of these beings. According to A. H. Clough: He thinks it absurd that there should be no mean between the two extremes of an immortal and a mortal being; that there cannot be in nature so vast a flaw, without some intermedial kind of life, partaking of them both. As, therefore, we find the intercourse between the soul and the body to be made by the animal spirits, so between divinity and humanity there is this species of demons.

It is not surprising, then, to find that the "philosophers" disagreed with Agobard on the nature of the three men and the woman who were captured by the mob in Lyons: The famous Cabalist Zedechias, in the reign of your Pepin, took it into his head to convince the world that the Elements are inhabited by those peoples whose nature I have just described to you. The expedient of which he bethought himself was to advise the Sylphs to show themselves in the Air to everybody: They did so sumptuosly. These beings were seen in the Air in human form, sometimes in battle array marching in good order, halting under arms, or encamped beneath magnificent tents; sometimes on wonderfully constructed aerial ships, whose flying squadrons roved at the will of the Zephyrs.

What happened? Do you suppose that ignorant age would so much as reason as to the nature of these marvellous spectacles? The people straightaway believed that sorcerers had taken possession of the Air for the purpose of raising tempest and bringing hail upon their crops.

The learned theologians and jurists were soon of the same opinion as the masses. The Emperor believed it as well; and this ridiculous chimera went so far that the wise Charlemagne, and after him Louis the Debonair, imposed grievous penalties upon all these supposed Tyrants of the Air.

Now comes an account of outright contact, which I quote from the same book, Entretiens sur les sciences secrétes:

The Sylphs seeing the populace, the peasants and even the crowned heads thus alarmed against them, determined to dissipate the bad opinion people had of their innocent fleet by carrying off men from every locality and showing them their beautiful women, their Republic and their manner of government, and then setting them down again on earth in divers parts of the world. They carried out their plan. The people who saw these men as they were descending came running from every direction, convinced beforehand that they were sorcerers who had separated from their companions in order to come and scatter poisons on the fruit and in the springs. Carried away by the frenzy with which such fancies inspired them, they hurried these innocents off to the torture. The great number of them who were put to death by fire and water throughout the kingdom is incredible.

The most extraordinary case involved the abduction of four people and their return to earth: One day, among other instances, it chanced at Lyons that three men and a woman were seen descending from these aerial ships. The entire city gathered about them, crying out they were magicians and were sent by Grimaldus, Duke of Beneventum, Charlemagne's enemy, to destroy the French harvest. In vain the four innocents sought to vindicate themselves by saying that they were their own country-folk, and had been carried away a short time since by miraculous men who had shown them unheard-of marvels, and had desired to give them an account of what they had seen. The frenzied populace paid no heed to their defense, and were on the point of casting them into the fire, when the worthy Agobard, Bishop of Lyons, who having been a monk in that city had acquired considerable authority there, came running at the noise, and having heard the accusations of the people and the defense of the accused, gravely pronounced that both one and the other were false. That it was not true that these men had fallen from the sky, and that what they said they had seen there was impossible.

The people believed what their good father Agobard said rather than their own eyes, were pacified, set at liberty the four Ambassadors of the Sylphs, and recieved with wonder the book which Agobard wrote to confirm the judgement which he had pronounced. Thus the testimony of these four witnesses was rendered vain.

Such stories were so well established during the Middle Ages that the problem

of communicating with the Elementals became a major preoccupation of the hermetic Adepts and an important part of their philosophy. Paracelsus wrote an entire book on the nature of these beings, but he took great pains to warn the reader of the dangers of an association with them: I do not want to say here, because of the ills which might befall those who would try it, through which compact one associates with these beings, thanks to which compact they appear to us and speak to us.

And in his treatise entitled Why These Beings Appear to Us, he presented the following ingenious theory:

Everything God creates manifests itself to Man sooner or later. Sometimes God confronts him with the devil and the spirits in order to convince him of their existence. From the top of Heaven, He also sends the angels, His servants. Thus these beings appear to us, not in order to stay among us or become allied to us, but in order for us to become able to understand them. These apparitions are scarce, to tell the truth. But why should it be otherwise? Is it not enough for one of us to see an Angel, in order for all of us to believe in the other Angels?

Paracelsus was probably born in 1493, and only two years earlier Facius Cardan had recorded his observation of seven strange visitors directly related to the creatures of the elements who would be so puzzling to the great philosopher. The incident is preserved in the writings of his son, Jerome Cardan (1501-1576), who is well known to us today as a mathematician.

Jerome Cardan lived in Milan and was not only a methematician but also an occultist and a physician. In his book De Subtilitate, Cardan explains that he had often heard his father tell the particular story and finally searched for his record of the event, which read as follows: August 13, 1491. When I had completed the customary rites, at about the twentieth hour of the day, seven men duly appeared to me clothed in silken garments, resembling Greek togas, and wearing, as it were, shining shoes. The undergarments beneath their glistening and ruddy breastplates seemed to be wrought of crimson and were of extraordinary glory and beauty.

Nevertheless all were not dressed in this fashion, but only two who seemed to be of nobler rank than the others. The taller of them who was of ruddy complexion was attended by two companions, and the second, who was fairer

and of shorter stature, by three. Thus in all there were seven. He left no record as to whether their heads were covered. They were about forty years of age, but they did not appear to be above thirty. When asked who they were, they said that they were men composed, as it were, of air, and subject to birth and death. It was true that their lives were much longer than ours, and might even reach to three hundred years' duration. Questioned on the immortality of our soul, they affirmed that nothing survives which is peculiar to the individual... When my father asked them why they did not reveal treasures to men if they knew where they were, they answered that it was forbidden by a peculiar law under the heaviest penalties for anyone to communicate this knowledge to men. They remained with my father for over three hours. But when he questioned them as to the cause of the universe they were not agreed. The tallest of them denied that God had made the world from eternity. On the contrary, the other added that God created it from moment to moment, so that should He desist for an instant the world would perish.... Be this fact or fable, so it stands.

Nearly three centuries later, in September 1768, a young man of sixteen was traveling to the University of Leipzig with two passengers from Frankfurt. It rained most of the journey, and the coach sometimes had trouble moving uphill. On one occasion when the passengers had left their seats to walk behind the horses, the young man noticed a strange luminous object at ground level: All at once, in a ravine on the right-hand side of the way, I saw a sort of amphitheatre, wonderfully illuminated. In a funnel-shaped space there were innumerable little lights gleaming, ranged step-fashion over one another; and they shone so brilliantly that the eye was dazzled. But what still more confused the sight was that they did not keep still, but jumped about here and there, as well downwards from above as vice versa, and in every direction. The greater of them, however, remained stationary, and beamed on. It was only with the greatest reluctance that I suffered myself to be called away from the spectacle, which I could have wished to examine more closely.... Now whether this was a pandemonium of will-o'-the-wisps, or a company of luminous creatures I will not decide.

The young man in question was Goethe. You will find this sighting in the sixth book of his autobiography, according to movie director and occult scholar Kenneth Anger, to whom I am indebted for this very interesting discovery. Would the German poet and scientist have had occasion to learn more about the

"luminous creatures" had he lived in the twentieth century? If Paracelsus came back, would he find new material for his theories on the nature of the strange and fugitive races of beings from the sky? We can safely assume that their attention would be immediately attracted to the modern files of UFO landings and abduction reports.

Return of the Humanoids

One night in January 1958, a woman whose name I am not authorized to publish was driving along the New York State Thruway, in the vicinity of Niagara Falls, in the midst of a violent snowstorm.

The exact time was 1:30 A.M. She was going to visit her son, then in the army, and she was driving very carefully, trying to find an exit, for she believed the Thruway was closed ahead of her.

Visibility was extremely bad. Hence she had no chance to think when she suddenly saw what seemed to be an airplane wreck on the center parkway:

A large shape was visible, and a slim rod at least fifty feet high was illuminated and getting shorter as though it were sinking into the ground. My motor slowed down and as I came closer my car stopped completely. I became panicky and tried desperately to start it as I had no lights.

My first thought was to get out and see what was happening but I suddenly saw two shapes rising around that slim pole which was still growing shorter. They were suspended but moving about it. They seemed to be like animals with four legs and a tail but two front feelers under the head, like arms. Then, before I could even gasp the things disappeared and the shape rose and I then realized it was a saucer, it spun and zoomed about ten feet off the ground and up into the air and I could net even see where it went.

My lights suddenly came on. I started the car and it was all right. I pulled up to that place, got out with a flashlight and walked over to where it had been sitting. A large hole was melted in the snow about a foot across and grass was showing on it. The grass was warm, but nothing was dug up around there.

The woman, who met only with disbelief when she told her story to her family,

reported the case in a letter to my correspondent Otto Binder when his syndicated series "Our Space Age" began to appear in a number of newspapers.

The most puzzling element in this account is not so much what is described but the fact that such stories have become, since 1946, rather common in all parts of the world. To a physicist, of course, they appear unbelievable, just as the strange manikin met by St. Anthony would appear unbelievable to a biologist. And yet there are several cases on record in which similar accounts are associated with traces that can hardly be questioned.

In the celebrated incident at Socorro, New Mexico, it was a policeman, Lonnie Zamora, who reported seeing two small beings, dressed in white, close to a shiny egg-shaped object, which rested on four pads before it took off with a thunderous noise, only to become perfectly silent as it flew away. The incident took place on April 24, 1964, and was the occasion for some interesting measurements (by local police officials and a Federal Bureau of Investigation man) of the traces left by the object. Here again we observe an emotional pattern strangely reminiscent of the medieval scene just surveyed: the witness in the Socorro case, when he was about to be interviewed by Air Force investigators, was so little convinced that he had observed a device of human construction that he asked to see a priest before releasing his report to the authorities.

Another case hard to discount is the report of the Kentucky family who claimed to have been besieged by several "little men," whose appearance was completely fantastic. The incident occurred on the night of April 21, 1955, and was the occasion of many strange observations of the behavior of the "visitors." One of the creatures was seen approaching the farmhouse with both hands raised.

When it was about twenty feet away, two of the witnesses shot at the intruder. It "did a flip" and was lost in the darkness. Then it appeared at the window when the man came back inside the house and was again shot at. Another creature, seen on the roof, was knocked over by a bullet, but instead of falling, it floated to the ground.

The entities had oversized heads, almost perfectly round, and very long arms,

terminating in huge hands armed with talons. They wore a sort of glowing aluminium suit, which is reminiscent of the sylphs of 1491. Their eyes were very large and apparently very sensitive. They always approached the house from the darkest corner. The eyes had no pupils and no eyelids. They were much larger than human eyes and set on the side of the head. The creatures generally walked upright, but when shot at, they would run on all fours with extreme rapidity, and their arms seemed to provide most of the propulsion.

On September 10, 1954, in Quarouble, a small French village near the Belgian border, at about 10:30 P.M., Marius Dewilde stepped outside and was at once intrigued by a dark mass on the railroad tracks. Dewilde then heard footsteps. Turning on his light, he found himself facing two beings wearing very large helmets and what seemed to be heavy diving suits. They had broad shoulders, but Dewilde did not see their arms. They were less than four feet tall. Dewilde moved toward them with the intention of intercepting them, but a light appeared on the side of the dark object on the tracks, and he found he could not move. When he regained control of his body, the two visitors had entered the supposed machine and flown away.

This classic observation had a strange sequel, never before published. French civilian investigators who studied the case were cooperating closely with local police officials, but there were other people on the site, notably representatives of the Air Police from Paris. When an inquiry was made regarding some stones found calcined, or white hot, at the spot where the saucer had been seen by Dewilde, it was discovered that even the police could not obtain information as to the results of the analyses. In the words of the local police chief:

The official body working in liason with the Air Police belongs to the Ministry of National Defense. The very name of this Ministry excludes the idea of any communication.

On November 19, 1954, the police confirmed that Dewilde had made a second report concerning an observation of an object "in the vicinity of his home." However, the police said, Dewilde and his family have decided, for fear of adverse publicity, to take no one in their confidence regarding this second occurrence. Therefore you will find no mention of it in local newspapers.

Furthermore, civilian investigators were told – politely but in no uncertain terms – that any further information on such incidents would be kept confidential by the police.

Reports continued, however, and some of them would have delighted Paracelsus. On October 14, 1954, a miner named Starovski claimed to have met, on a country road near Erchin (also in the north of France), a strange being of small height and bulky figure with large slanted eyes and a fur-covered body. The midget, less than four feet tall, had a large head and wore a brown skullcap, which formed a fillet a few inches above the eyes. The eyes protruded, with very small irises; the nose was flat; the lips were thick and red. A minor detail: the witness did not claim he had seen the creature emerge from a flying saucer or reenter it. He just happened to meet the strange being, who did not wear any kind of respiratory device. Before he could think of stopping him, the creature had disappeared.

Six days later, on October 20, 1954, in Parravici d'Erba, near Como, Italy, a man had just put his car in the garage when he saw a strange being, covered with a luminous suit, about four feet tall, standing near a tree. When he saw the motorist, the creature aimed a beam from some sort of flashlight at him, paralyzing the witness until a motion he made when clenching the fist holding the garage keys seemed to free him. He rushed to attack the stranger, who rose from the ground and fled with a soft whirring sound. The author of this unbelievable story was thirty-seven years old and was known locally as a trustworthy man. He arrived home in a state of great shock and went to bed with a high fever. The details of the case were obtained through an investigation by the Italian police.

Eleven years later a new flurry of reports began. On July 1, 1965, Maurice Masse, a French farmer who lived in Valensole, arrived in his field at 6:00 A.M. and was getting ready to start his tractor when he heard an unusual noise. Stepping into the open, he saw that a machine had landed in his lavender field. He thought it must be some sort of prototype and walked toward it, with a mind to tell the pilots, in no uncertain words, to go find another landing spot for their contraption. It was only when he was within twenty feet of the machine that he came in full view of the scene and realized his mistake.

The object was egg-shaped, had a round cockpit, was supported by six thin

legs and a central pivot, and was not bigger than a car. In front, appearing to examine a plant, were the two pilots. They were dressed in onepiece, gray-greenish suits. On the left side of their belts was a small container; a larger one was on the right side. They were less than four feet tall and had human eyes, but their heads were very large. They had partically no mouth, only a very small opening, without lips. They wore no respiratory device, no headgear, and no gloves. They had small, normal hands. When Masse came upon them, they seemed to become suddenly aware of his existence, and yet it was without any indication of fear or surprise that one of the "pilots" took a small tube from its container and pointed it at Masse – with the result that the witness found himself suddenly incapable of movement.

The two entities looked at Masse and appeared to be exchanging their impressions vocally in a sort of gargle. These sounds came from their throats, insisted the witness, but the mouths did not move.

The eyes, in the meantime, conveyed human expressions. In private, Masse told me that he had not been frightened by their attitude and that it contained more friendly curiosity than hostility toward him.

After some time – estimated by Masse at about one minute – the creatures went inside the craft. The door closed "like the front part of a wooden file cabinet," but Masse could still see them through the cockpit. They were facing him as the object took off in the opposite direction, first hovering a few feet from the ground, then rising obliquely with the takeoff speed of a jet plane. When it was about sixty yards away, it vanished.

I closely questioned the witness on this last point, but Masse insisted he could not say whether the object went away so fast that the eye could not follow it or whether it actually disappeared. He made it quite clear, however, that "one moment, the thing was there, and the next moment, it was not there anymore." Masse remained alone in his field, paralyzed.

The word paralysis is not properly used in connection with incidents of this type. Masse said that he was conscious during the whole observation. His physiological functions (respiratory, heartbeat) were not hampered. But he could not move. Then he became very frightened indeed. Alone in his field, unable even to call for help, Masse thought he was going to die. It was only

after about twenty minutes that he gradually regained voluntary control of his muscles and was able to go home.

There is a sequel to his experience. For several weeks after the incident, Masse was overcome with drowsiness, and all his relatives – as well as the investigators – observed that he needed so much sleep that he found it difficult to stay awake even for four hours at a time. This is another little-known characteristic of close-proximity cases. To Masse, who was used to working "from sunup to sundown," this was a very impressive and disturbing consequence of his experience. Another result of the publicity the case attracted was the great damage to Masse's field, as crowds of tourists gathered to see the traces left by the craft.

At this point, I should say that Masse is a man respected in the community. A former Resistance fighter, a conscientious and successful farmer, he is regarded as absolutely trustworthy by the police authorities who investigated the case under the direction of Captain Valnet, of Digne. Yet this man tells us a story that does not simply appear fanciful; it is completely unbelievable.

What is Masse's impression of the visitors? For some reason, he says, he knows they meant no harm. They were not hostile to him, only indifferent. As he stood facing them, during that long minute, he suddenly was overcome with the certitude that they were good – a belief he is unable to rationalize, because at no point did he understand their strange language.

The story is fantastic. Yet it reminds us of the account Barney and Betty Hill gave under hypnosis of their alleged abduction in New Hampshire. On their way back from vacationing in Canada in September 1961, they had seen a strange light over the White Mountains. It came close to the road, and they next remember being in their car some sixty miles south, without any memory of the intervening travel time. Under hypnosis they remembered a long sequence of events involving abduction by small beings and a "medical" examination. The account included a description of an alien language, of entities whose expressions were almost human, of an overwhelming feeling of confidence, and of not the slightest indication that the incident had a meaningful purpose or followed an intelligent pattern. Of considerable interest to the psychologist is the fact that the entities are endowed with the same fugitiveness and behave with the same ignorance of logical or physical laws as the reflection of a

dream, the monsters of our nightmares, the unpredictable witches of our childhood. Yet their craft do leave deep indentations in the ground, according to observers who were fully awake and absolutely competent at the time of sighting. These indentations have been photographed and measured in hundreds of cases.

What does it all mean? How can one reconcile these apparently contradictory facts? Some, in a laudable attempt, question the classical search for patterns: "Is it necessarily true," they ask, "that we would detect meaningful patterns – in the same sense of our own intelligence level – in the behavior of a superior race? Is it not much more likely that we would find in their actions only random data and incoherent pictures, much as a dog would if confronted with a mathematician writing on a blackboard? If so, it is only after new concepts have emerged in our own consciousness that we could 'discover' the meaning of their presence in our environment. And, if a superior race does in fact generate what we are now observing as the UFO phenomenon, perhaps it is precisely with the purpose of changing the course of human destiny by presenting us with evidence of our limitations in the technical, as well as the mental, realm?"

Children of the Unknown – if they are not real, should we see these rumors as a sign that something in human imagination has changed, bringing into a new light uncharted areas of our "collective unconscious?" They may be only children of our fancy, and our interest toward them akin to our love for Batman and Cinderella. But they may be real. Modern science rules over a narrow universe, one particular variation on an infinite theme.

In any case, it is important to understand what need these images fulfill, why this knowledge is both so exciting and so distressing to us. Such is the subject of this book.

## 2. Winged Disks and Crispy Pancakes

We have just established that a close parallel exists between modern claims of UFO contact and age-old traditions that involved alien spiritual entities. But how closely are these stories related?

Can we be sure that we are really witnessing the continuation of the same current, the reemergence of the same underground stream?

In this chapter we will go below the surface of the stories and draw precise parallels between the physical observations made in earlier times and those that characterize modern "close encounters."

These physical manifestations include the shape of the flying objects, their representation as "winged disks," the beings associated with them, the beams of light they can manipulate, the alteration of the sense of time they produce, and the peculiar characteristics of the interaction between human witnesses and entities. Often the dialogue has an absurd quality that conveys not a literal fact but a higher, symbolic truth. And this absurdity carries over to the objects exchanged with the occupants and even the physical traces they leave: rings of flattened grass, burned ground, areas of extreme pressure. Until we have formed a clear understanding of these patterns and recognized that they were already found in the accounts of antiquity and medieval times, we cannot hope to make sense of the UFO phenomenon.

### A Universal Fact

The problem before us now is this: if the reality behind the UFO phenomenon is both physical and psychic in nature, and if it manipulates space and time in ways our scientific concepts are inadequate to describe, is there any reason for its effects to be limited to our culture or to our generation? We have already established that no country has had the special privilege of these manifestations. Yet we must carry the argument further: if the UFO phenomenon is not tied to social conditions specific to our time, or to specific technological achievements, then it may represent a universal fact. It may have been with us, in one form or another, as long as the human race has existed on this planet.

Something happened in classical times that is inadequately explained by historical theories. The suggestion that the same thing might be happening again should make us extremely interested in bringing every possible light to bear on this problem. Beginning in the second century B.C. and continuing until the fall of the Roman Empire, the intellectual elites of the Mediterranean world, raised in a spirit of scientific rationalism, were confronted and eventually defeated by irrational element similar to that contained in modern apparitions of unexplained phenomena, an element that is amplified by their summary rejection by our own science. It accompanied the collapse of ancient civilizations.

Commenting on this parallel, French science writer Aime Michel proposes the following scene.

Consider one of the Alexandrian thinkers, a man like Ptolemaeus, the second-century astronomer thoroughly schooled in the rational methods of Archimedes, Euclid, and Aristotle. And imagine him reading the Apocalypse, various writings about Armageddon. How would he react to such an experience? He would merely shrug, says Aime Michel: "It would never occur to him to place the slightest credence in such a compendium of what must regard as insanities. Such a scene must have taken place thousands of times at the end of classical antiquity. And we know that every time there was the same rejection, the same shrugging, because we have no record of any critical examination of the doctrines, ideas, and claims of the counterculture that expressed itself through the Apocalypse. This counterculture was too absurd to retain the attention of a reader of Plato. A short time – a very short time – elapsed, the counterculture triumphed, and Plato was forgotten for a thousand years. Could it happen again?"

Only a thorough examination of the ancient records can save us from the effects of such cultural myopia. Among other interesting objects, some of the artifacts that have come to us from Phoenicia provide insight into the idea of contact in antiquity.

Phoenician Amulets

History books tell us that the Phoenician civilization was established long before the Hebrew migrations, when several Semitic tribes founded a series of

cities on the Mediterranean littoral. The main ones were known as Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, and Byblos, and each was governed by an oligarchy or by a king. At the height of its development, Phoenicia itself extended through that part of Syria that goes from Nahr-al-Kabir (Eleutherus) on the north to Mount Carmel on the south.

Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, one of this century's most distinguished scholars of Egypt and Mesopotamia, states that the Phoenicians were not a literary people. Unlike most Semitic peoples, they loved the sea. They used their abundant forests to supply timber for their ships. Their work was exceptionally refined and their products were sold by their merchants throughout the ancient world, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and India. They had learned from Babylon the art of dyeing, from Egypt the craft of glassblowing, and they used accurate systems of weights. Little is known of their religious beliefs, although it is often pointed out, on linguistic grounds, that the names of their gods showed direct Babylonian, Egyptian, and Greek influences.

Of their ritual practices we are told that they sacrificed their firstborn children in times of trouble; that they killed their prisoners of war on the altars of their gods; and that their women surrendered their virginity in the sanctuaries of Astarte. For their personal magical protection the Phoenicians appear to have adopted the type of amulets used in Babylonia and Assyria, and a collection of cylinder seals has been preserved in the British Museum. Some of these artifacts, which are shown in Wallis Budge's book Amulets and Superstitions, may date from a few centuries B.C., probably from about 400 to 300 B.C. Five of these cylinder seals depict a Winged Disk, often with appendages. Figures that are referred to in the literature as "divine beings" are seen emerging from these disks in four cases. And in every one of them human figures in ceremonial dress appear to be involved in rituals that contain. Assyrian features.

The first cylinder seal shows a hero holding in each hands the foreleg of a winged beast. One of these two beasts has horns on its head and a tail. Above the human being is the winged disk, from which a god is emerging. ("Ahuramazda or some Assyrian god," writes Sir Wallis Budge.) The interpretation of the second amulet involves scorpion-men and sexual symbols. It is apparent that two strange creatures, obviously male, are supporting a

winged disk above a sacred tree. To the right is a worshipper, while another person is bringing some sort of animal as a sacrifice. Here, again, two divine figures are to be seen, emerging from the disk.

In the third amulet two large winged figures – classically interpreted as "priests wearing winged garments" – frame a large disk with extended legs. Directly beneath the disk is a symbol of lightning or a thunderbolt, before which a man appears to be standing in adoration. There is something on top of the disk.

Another artifact: a sphinx and a goat stand on either side of a sacred tree above which is a winged disk. Two men are performing a ritual in connection with the scene.

In the last amulet two of the strange dwarfish figures, which authorities call scorpion-men (despite their large breasts on this particular seal), are supporting a "winged disk from which project the heads of three divine beings." Two men are in adoration before the disk, beneath which a sort of vaulted door can be seen. To the left is a very strange figure interpreted as "a god holding a gazelle or goat under each arm."

The interpretation of this collection of artifacts raises several questions, because the classical statement that the flying disk is simply a primitive representation of the sun or the soul leaves much to be desired. Is it common for the winged disk (a frequent symbol in antiquity) to show several beings emerging from its upper part? In what context are such representations encountered? If the disk is interpreted as some mythological symbol connected with the cosmos (as is indicated by the abundance of astronomical designs in the seals: stars, crescent moons), should we speculate that the representation of a disk with extended claws may in fact seek to preserve the memory of a vision, or observation, of a flying craft capable of landing?

This speculation does not answer all our questions but it provides a stimulating avenue of research into ancient symbolism. It is certainly fascinating to read the best accepted interpretation for the zigzag symbol in some of the amulets is lightning or a thunderbolt. Why should a thunderbolt be associated with a winged disk, and why should three people in elaborate magical garments stand in adoration before it? The scene suggests plan and purpose rather than a

chance occurrence of some purely natural phenomenon. It suggests overt contact with a flying craft.

Equally fascinating to the student of close-encounter cases are the scenes in which animals are carried to the hovering disk. In one case, a god is seen holding a horned animal under each arm – a scene certainly reminiscent of many a claim of animal kidnapping by UFO occupants. Three of the cylinder seals show approximately the same thing: a disk above some elaborate ground structure, a human in adoration, and someone bringing a horned animal toward the center of the scene.

The beings themselves fall into the following categories: 1. Human beings that Assyriologists call worshippers, priests, kings, etc. Sometimes they are wearing winged garments.

2. The gods. They are shown either emerging from the disk and wearing, in some cases, elaborate headdresses or walking outside the disk, as in one amulet where an entity seems to be wearing its hair in three long tresses on either side of the head.

3. The scorpion-men, who have large phallic attributes in one figure but in another case would more properly be called scorpion-women. They are only seen supporting the disk. It would be interesting to find out where the word scorpion comes from in connection with these figures. The scorpion-men are consistently about two-thirds the size of men, who in turn are smaller than the gods. (Professor Douglas Price-Williams of UCLA points out that in the Gilgamesh epic the scorpion creatures were the guardians of the mountain of the sun. The scorpion-man in the Babylonian Enuma Elish was a monster created by chaos at the beginning of the world. Price-Williams adds: "These creatures would thus be tellurian beings, 'chthonic' as Jung would have said.")

4. Various monsters, such as a horned creature or a sphinx.

Why should the observation of a flying disk be represented in the context of an obviously magical ceremony that does not appear to have any traditional characteristic of Phoenician religion? We are told, for instance, that the Phoenicians held the same view as the Hebrews concerning the survival of the soul, that they buried their dead with great care, and that their sacrificial

ceremonies involved killing human beings and sacred prostitution. Why then is it that, if the seals are associated with spiritual or religious values, they depict nothing of this, but do instead show winged disks that appear to come from a star, contain strange beings who carry off earth animals, and emit lightning bolts? And why are the human assistants wearing special vestments with wings on them?

Representation of flying disks in religion does not stop with the Phoenicians. The symbol is a basic one in the early Christian church, and it is consistently associated with the angels. Christian theology does not have much to say about the angels, just as official Muslim theology remains discreet about the jinn. Some rare documents, however, give details concerning the nature of these beings. According to Japanese researcher Y. Matsumura, the religious Sophia, a written document commenting on the dogma of the Greek Orthodox Church preserved in the Leningrad National Library, describes the process of communication between God and the angels: How does the Lord guide His Angel, if the Angel cannot see the face of His Lord? An Angel has a projection on the upper part of his eyes, where a sacred cloud rests. He has also a thing to recieve sounds on his head. This thing makes noises as an Angel recieves an order where to go from his Lord. Then he quickly looks at the mirror in his hand, and he gets in the mirror something on which an instruction from God is given.

I have not been able to verify directly the existence of this document and the accuracy of the translation, but it is consistent with a number of paintings, icons, and murals that depict contact between "God" and His messengers and contact between the messengers and men. Communication for a long time took place through pictorial representation rather than words, and it is not surprising to find few descriptions of such contact in written language.

I am inclined to a literal, rather than purely symbolic, interpretation of the scenes depicted on the Phoenician amulets, and I am also tempted to accept as a working hypothesis that in times remote contact occurred between human consciousness and another consciousness, variously described as demonic, angelic, or simply alien. This would explain much of the symbolic power retained in our own time by the concept of "signs in the sky." It would account for the fact that modern-day UFOs seem to present archaic as well as futuristic

designs (as in the representation of the Arabic astrological sign for Venus on the object seen at Socorro, New Mexico, by patrolman Lonnie Zamora), and it would also explain the fascination that people of all countries and races have always had for the strange entities from "above."

How constant these observations and visions have remained will be seen by comparing the Phoenician seal story with the following letter from a woman who saw a scorpion-man... in our time!

The Case of the Oxford Scorpion-Man

A letter from a British woman begins:

At the lecture by Jacques Vallee at the London A.A. [Architects Association] on the 12th of December I was surprised by one of the slides of a Phoenician seal showing a winged sphere held up by two creatures which he described as "Scorpion men." Perhaps I have seen such a man myself....

It was the summer of 1968, about 4:00 P.M. She was driving from London to a place near Stratford to visit friends for the weekend. She had a companion in the car with her. Just outside Oxford they both saw a shining disk in the sky. They slowed and then stopped to watch it as it darted and dodged. Another car stopped to watch it, too. Eventually it sank behind the trees. They resumed their trip, but the really striking events took place after the disk had disappeared: During the drive between Burford and Stratford I had some startling, and to me, novel insights into what I can only describe as the Nature of Reality. They were connected in some way to this shining disk, and have had a profound effect on me, causing what is commonly known as a personality change. I won't try to explain what those insights were since almost all the religions of the world have tried to do this and have failed. (In that afternoon I changed from an agnostic to a gnostic, if that means anything at all.) However, these insights hit me like bolts from the blue, as though from outside, one after the other. I've never had a similar experience since.

The letter continues with a description of what the woman saw that evening after supper, a description that seems to come straight out of a John Fowles novel: the guests were in the sitting room, which had open French windows leading out onto the lawn, and the woman went over to the window to get a

breath of fresh air. The weather, she wrote, was "very hot and close."

The light from the room shone in an arc of about ten feet around the window. In that area I saw, as soon as I came to the window, a strange figure. My perception of it was heightened by the state of frozen panic it produced in me. It was for me without any doubt, a demon, or devil because of my Western oriented interpretation (I imagine) of the vision or creature or animal or man, or whatever it was I saw. Like the "Scorpion man," as well as Pan, it had dog or goat-like legs. It was covered in silky, downy fur, dark, and glinting in the light. It was unmistakably humanoid, and to my mind malevolent. It crouched, and stared, unblinkingly, at me with light, grape-green eyes that slanted upwards and had no pupils. The eyes shone and were by far the most frightening thing about it. It was, I think retrospectively, trying to communicate with me, but my panic interfered with any message I might have received. If it had stood to its full height it would have been about four to five feet tall. It had pointed ears and a long muzzle. It gave the impression of emaciation; its hands and fingers were as thin as sticks.

Eventually, convinced that I was hallucinating, I went and sat down for a while, until the panic had subsided. Then I went to see if it was still there. It was, except that it had moved further into the shadows on the edge of the arc of light. I made sure I kept away from that door for the rest of the evening, and left the next day. I told no one. That it may have been connected with the shining disk I only realized when I saw that slide.

I have other reports in my files of such forgotten observations that the witnesses only recollected when their memory was triggered by a slide, a book cover, or a lecture.

The Beam of Light

A major feature in all religious traditions involves a mysterious beam of light emanating from a point in the sky or from a cloud of peculiar shape and focused on a human being. This beam usually is interpreted as a sign of blessing which conveys information from a divine source.

I am intrigued by this concept because it is a recurrent one in modern contact cases. Psychic experimenter Robert Monroe has described a similar

phenomenon in his own investigations of out-of-body consciousness. On the night of September 9, 1960, as he was lying on his bed, Monroe says (in his book Out of the Body):

I suddenly felt bathed in and transfixed by a very powerful beam that seemed to come from the North, about 30º above the horizon. I was completely powerless, with no will of my own, and I felt as if I were in the presence of a very strong force, in personal contact with it.

It had intelligence of a form beyond my comprehension, and it came directly (down the beam?) into my head, and seemed to be searching every memory in my mind. I was truly frightened because I was powerless to do anything about this intrusion.

On September 16, at night, again from the verbatim notes of Robert Monroe: The same impersonal probing, the same power, from the same angle. However, this time I recieved the firm impression that I was inextricably bound by loyalty to this intelligent force, always had been, and that I had a job to perform here on earth....

I got the impression of huge pipes, so ancient they were covered with undergrowth and rust.

Something like oil was passing through them, but it was much higher in energy than oil, and vitally needed and valuable elsewhere (assumption: not on this material planet).

On September 30, the same pattern:

They seemed to soar up into the sky, while I called after them, pleading. Then I was sure that their mentality and intelligence were far beyond my understanding. It is an impersonal, cold intelligence, with none of the emotions of love or compassion which we respect so much, yet this may be the omnipotence we call God. Visits such as these in mankind's past could well have been the basis for all of our religious beliefs, and our knowledge today could provide no better answer than we could a thousand years past.

By this time, it was getting light, and I sat down and cried, great deep sobs

such as I have never cried before, because then I knew without any qualification of future hope of change that the God of my childhood, of the churches, of religion throughout the world was not as we worshipped him to be – that for the rest of my life, I would "suffer" the loss of this illusion.

The Case of the Tranquilizing Light

A case that took place in March 1958, and which was later reported in the pages of The Flying Saucer Review by French investigator Joel Mesnard, provides an opportunity to verify again the strange properties of the lights associated with the UFO phenomenon in modern as in ancient times.

The witness here is a twenty-eight-year-old French legionnaire who was on sentry duty at the Algerian camp of Bouahmama, in the desert south of Constantine. Shortly after 12:30 A.M., this man heard a whistling noise that seemed to be coming from the sky, and as he looked up he saw a very large object, about one thousand feet in diameter, coming down some 150 feet away from him.

The most remarkable thing about this object, however, was not its enormous size but the intense conical beam of emerald-green light that came down from its underside.

The recollections of the legionnaire beyond this point are vague and, by his own admission, may not correspond to reality. Instead of either firing his gun to alert others or picking up the field telephone to call his superiors, he remained staring at the object for over three-quarters of an hour.

According to this man, as interviewed by Joel Mesnard: "The pale green and emerald colors were the most beautiful, relaxing, and fascinating colors he had ever seen."

The object departed in the most classical way: first the whistling noise, then the rising to an altitude of about three hundred feet, and finally the climb at "tremendous speed" toward the northwest. As the object left and the man returned to full awareness, the happy, ecstatic feeling he had experienced was replaced by sadness. He picked up the telephone and reported what he had seen to his superiors. They initially thought that the experience was a

hallucination due to stress, but it is to the credit of the French military that a thorough investigation was pursued. Instead of sweeping the case under the rug (and the French Legion in Algeria had more pressing problems at that time than investigating UFO landings!), the officers went to the site, examined it carefully, found no physical evidence, resumed their questioning of the witness, and, as he kept insisting on the veracity of the event and they had no reason to doubt his truthfulness, they sent him to Paris for a more detailed examination. In Paris he was kept under observation for one week at the Val-de-Grace Military Hospital. An electroencephalogram revealed nothing unusual. The medical staff concluded that he was in a state of good mental and physical health and was not suffering from the strain of war in any unusual way.

Mr. Mesnard met the witness in May 1970. The legionnaire had returned to civilian life and impressed the investigator with his practical, down-to-earth sense. He had been looking for no publicity whatsoever and was even reluctant to discuss his experience. When he did so, he answered questions in a straight, matter-of-fact way. He has had no illness of any kind since the day of the sighting, no new experience of an unusual type, and he recalls the extremely peaceful state induced by the presence of the object. "It was like time running very slowly... it was like being in another world."

Is the mechanism of UFO apparitions, then, an invariant in all cultures? Are we faced here with another reality that transcends our limited notions of space and time? I see no better hypothesis at this point of our knowledge of UFO phenomena. Certainly the space visitors hypothesis fails to explain adequately the ancient symbolism. We do not have a simple series of incidents that could be explained as an encounter with space travelers who might have spotted the earth and explored it casually on their way to another cosmic destination. Instead, we have a pattern of manifestations, opening the gates to a spiritual level, pointing a way to a different consciousness, and producing irrational, absurd events in their wake.

The Phoenician amulets, the close encounters with "occupants" in our time, the ancient beam from heaven, and the focused light from UFOs seem to imply a technology capable of both physical manifestation and psychic effects, a technology that strikes deep at the collective consciousness, confusing us,

molding us – as perhaps it confused and molded human civilizations in antiquity.

"Look But do Not Touch"

It was a great wonder, a sign in heaven indeed, the marvelous airship that flew over the United States in the spring of 1897. And the rediscovery of the remarkable wave of reports it generated has provided a crucial missing link between the apparitions of older days and modern saucer stories, thanks to researchers such as Donald Hanlon, Jerome Clark, and Lucius Farish. The result of their investigations is astonishing.

In California, in November 1896, hundreds of residents of the San Francisco area saw a large, elongated, dark object that carried brilliant searchlights and was capable of flying against the wind.

Between January and March 1897, it vanished entirely. And suddenly a staggering number of observations of an identical object were made in the Midwest. A witness named Alexander Hamilton described it: a craft with turbine wheels and a glass section with strange beings aboard looking down, a description not unlike that given by Barney and Betty Hill. In March, an object of even stranger appearance was seen by Robert Hibbard, a farmer living fifteen miles north of Sioux City, Iowa. Hibbard not only saw the airship, but an anchor hanging from a rope attached to the mysterious craft caught his clothes and dragged him several dozen feet, until he fell back to earth.

Presenting in an orderly fashion all the accounts of that period would itself fill a book. My object here is only to review the most detailed observations of the behavior of the airship's occupants on the ground. But first, how did the object behave? It maneuvered very much in the way UFOs are said to maneuver, except that airships were never seen flying in formation or performing aerial dances. Usually, an airship flew rather slowly and majestically – of course, such an object in 1897

ran no risk of being pursued – except in a few close-proximity cases when it was reported to depart "as a shot out of a gun." Another difference from modern UFOs lies in the fact that its leisurely trajectory often took it over large urban areas. Omaha, Milwaukee, Chicago, and other cities were thus visited;

each time, large crowds gathered to watch the object. Otherwise, the airship exhibited all the typical activities of UFOs: hovering, dropping "probes" – on Newton, Iowa, on April 10, for example – changing course abruptly, changing altitude at great speed, circling, landing and taking off, sweeping the countryside with powerful light beams.

The occupants of the airship were as variously described as are UFO operators. Several reports could be interpreted to mean that dwarfs were among them, but it was not stated in so many words by witnesses. Alexander Hamilton says that the beings were the strangest he had ever seen and that he did not care to see them again.

The UFO's operators who engaged in discussion with human witnesses were indistinguishable from the average American population of the time. This, for instance, is the experience related by Captain James Hooton (described in the Arkansas Gazette as "the well-known Iron Mountain railroad conductor"):

I had gone down to Texarkana to bring back a special, and knowing that I would have some eight to ten hours to spend in Texarkana, I went to Homan (Arkansas) to do a little hunting.

It was 3 o'clock in the afternoon when I reached that place. The spot was good, and before I knew it, it was after 6 o'clock when I started to make my way back toward the railroad station. As I was tramping through the bush my attention was attracted by a familiar sound, a sound for all the world like the working of an air pump on a locomotive.

I went at once in the direction of the sound, and there in an open space of some five or six acres, I saw the object making the noise. To say that I was astonished would but feebly express my feelings. I decided at once that this was the famous airship seen by so many people about the country.

There was a medium-size looking man aboard and I noticed that he was wearing smoked glasses. He was tinkering around what seemed to be the back end of the ship, and as I approached I was too dumbfounded to speak. He looked at me in surprise, and said: "Good day, sir; good day." I asked: "Is this the airship?" And he replied: "Yes, sir," whereupon three or four other men came out of what was apparently the keel of the ship.

A close examination showed that the keel was divided into two parts, terminating in front like the sharp of a knife-like edge, while the side of the ship bulged gradually toward the middle, and then receded. There were three large wheels upon each side made of some bending metal and arranged so that they became concave as they moved forward.

"I beg your pardon, sir," I said, "the noise sounds a great deal like a Westinghouse air brake."

"Perhaps it does, my friend: we are using condensed air and aeroplanes, but you will know more later on."

"All ready, sir," someone called out, when the party all disappeared below. I observed that just in front of each wheel a two-inch tube began to spurt air on the wheels and they commenced revolving. The ship gradually arose with a hissing sound. The aeroplanes suddenly sprang forward, turning their sharp end skyward, then the rudders at the end of the ship began to veer to one side and the wheel revolved so fast that one could scarcely see the blades. In less time than it takes to tell you, the ship had gone out of sight.

Captain Hooton adds that he could discover no bell or bell rope about the ship and was greatly shocked by this detail, since he thought "every well-regulated air locomotive should have one." He left a detailed drawing of the machine.

We next look at the testimony of Constable Sumpter and Deputy Sheriff McLemore, of Hot Springs, Arkansas:

While riding northwest from this city on the night of May 6, 1897, we noticed a brilliant light high in the heavens. Suddenly it disappeared and we said nothing about it, as we were looking for parties and did not want to make any noise. After riding four or five miles around through the hills we again saw the light, which now appeared to be much nearer the earth. We stopped our horses and watched it coming down, until all at once it disappeared behind another hill. We rode on about half a mile, when our horses refused to go further.

About a hundred yards distant we saw two persons moving around with lights. Drawing our Winchesters – for we were now thoroughly aroused to the importance of the situation – we demanded:

"Who is that, and what are you doing?"

A man with a long dark beard came forth with a lantern in his hand, and on being informed who we were proceeded to tell us that he and the others – a young man and a woman – were travelling through the country in an airship. We could plainly distinguish the outlines of the vessel, which was cigar-shaped and about sixty feet long, and looking just like the cuts that have appeared in the papers recently. It was dark and raining and the young man was filling a big sack with water about thirty yards away, and the woman was particular to keep back in the dark. She was holding an umbrella over her head. The man with the whiskers invited us to take a ride, saying that he could take us where it was not raining. We told him we believed we preferred to get wet.

Asking the man why the brilliant light was turned on and off so much, he replied that the light was so powerful that it consumed a great deal of his motive power. He said he would like to stop off in Hot Springs for a few days and take the hot baths, but his time was limited and he could not. He said they were going to wind up at Nashville, after thoroughly seeing the country. Being in a hurry we left and upon our return, about forty minutes later, nothing was to be seen. We did not hear or see the airship when it departed.

In the Chicago Chronicle of April 13, 1897, appeared the following, under the headline "Airship Seen In Iowa":

Fontanelle, Iowa, April 12. The airship was seen here at 8:30 tonight, and was viewed by the whole population. It came from the southeast, and was not over 200 feet above the treetops and moved very slowly, not to exceed ten miles an hour. The machine could be plainly seen, and is described as being sixty feet in length, and the vibration of the wings could be plainly seen. It carried the usual coloured lights, and the working of the machinery could be heard, as also could the strains of music, as from an orchestra. It was hailed, but passed on to the north, seeming to increase its speed, and disappeared. There is no doubt in Fontanelle that it was the real thing, and is testified to by the most prominent citizens.

Here the airship, which had appeared to Captain Hooton as a typically mechanical contraption, takes on a more fairylike appearance. The parallel

becomes even more striking in the following report, as pointed out by researcher Donald Hanlon. It is extracted from the April 28 edition of the Houston Daily Post:

Merkel, Texas, April 26. Some parties returning from church last night noticed a heavy object dragging along with a rope attached. They followed it until, in crossing the railroad, it caught on a rail. On looking up they saw what they supposed was the airship. It was not near enough to get an idea of the dimensions. A light could be seen protruding several windows; one bright light in front like the headlight of a locomotive.

After some ten minutes, a man was seen descending the rope. He came near enough to be plainly seen; he wore a light blue sailor suit and was small in size. He stopped when he discovered parties at the anchor, and cut the rope below him and sailed off in a northeast direction. The anchor is now on exhibition at the blacksmith shop of Elliot and Miller and is atracting the attention of hundreds of people.

"This sounds much too familiar to be taken lightly," comments Hanlon, who reminds us of the Sioux City incident – when Robert Hibbard was dragged by an anchor hanging from an airship – and of Drake's and Wilkin's account of two incidents that took place about 1211 A.D. or earlier.

According to the Irish story:

There happened in the borough of Cloera, one Sunday, while the people were at Mass, a marvel. In this town is a church dedicated to St. Kinarus. It befell that an anchor was dropped from the sky, with a rope attached to it, and one of the flukes caught in the arch above the church door. The people rushed out of the church and saw in the sky a ship with men on board, floating before the anchor cable, and they saw a man leap overboard and jump down to the anchor, as if to release it. He looked as if he were swimming in water. The folk rushed up and tried to seize him: but the Bishop forbade the people to hold the man, for it might kill him, he said. The man was freed, and hurried up to the ship, where the crew cut the rope and the ship sailed out of sight. But the anchor is in the church, and has been there ever since, as a testimony.

In Gervase of Tilbury's Otis Imperialia, a similar account is related as having

taken place in Gravesend, Kent, England. An anchor from a "cloudship" caught in a mound of stones in the churchyard. The people heard voices from above, and the rope was moved as if to free the anchor, to no avail. A man was then seen to slide down the rope and cut it. In one account, he then climbed back aboard the ship; in another, he died of suffocation.

The Houston Post of April 22, 1897, has a further report: Rockland: Mr. John M. Barclay, living near this place, reports that last night about 11 o'clock, after having retired, he heard his dog barking furiously, together with a whining noise. He went to the door to ascertain the trouble and saw something, he says, that made his eyes bulge out and but for the fact that he had been reading of an airship that was supposed to have been in or over Texas, he would have taken to the woods.

It was a peculiar shaped body, with an oblong shape, with wings and side attachments of various sizes and shapes. There were brilliant lights, which appeared much brighter than electric lights. When he first saw it, iy seemed perfectly stationary about five yards from the ground. It circled a few times and gradually descended to the ground in a pasture adjacent to his house. He took his Winchester and went down to investigate. As soon as the ship, or whatever it might be, alighted the lights went out. The night was bright enough for a man to be distinguished several yards, and when within about thirty yards of the ship he was met by an ordinary mortal, who requested him to lay his gun aside as no harm was intended.

Whereupon the following conversation ensued. Mr. Barclay enquired: "Who are you and what do you want?" "Never mind about my name, call it Smith. I want some lubricating oil and a couple of cold chisels if you can get them, and some bluestone. I suppose the saw mill hard by has the two former articles and the telegraph operator has the bluestone. Here is a ten-dollar bill: take it and get us these articles and keep the change for your trouble."

Mr. Barclay said: "What have you got down there? Let me go and see it." He who wanted to be called Smith said: "No, we cannot permit you to approach any nearer, but do as we request you and your kindness will be appreciated, and we will call you some future day and reciprocate your kindness by taking you on a trip."

Mr. Barclay went and procured the oil and cold chisels, but could not get the bluestone.

They had no change and Mr. Barclay tendered him the ten-dollar bill, but same was refused.

The man shook hands with him and thanked him cordially and asked that he not follow him to the vessel. As he left Mr. Barclay called him and asked where he was from and where he was going. He replied, " From anywhere, but we will be in Greece day after tomorrow. " He got on board, when there was again the whirling noise, and the thing was gone, as Mr.

Barclay expresses it, like a shot out of a gun. Mr. Barclay is perfectly reliable.

The same night, half an hour later (according to the Houston Post of April 26 and reported independently):

Josserand: Considerable excitement prevails at this writing in this usually quiet village of Jesserand, caused by a visit of the noted airship, which has been at so many points of late.

Mr. Frank Nichols, a prominent farmer living about two miles east of here, and a man of unquestioned veracity, was awakened night before last near the hour of twelve by whirring noise similar to that made by machinery. Upon looking out he was startled upon beholding brilliant lights streaming from a ponderous vessel of strange proportions, which rested upon the ground in his cornfield.

The Landing at Eagle River

It was an unusual day in 1961 for the Food and Drug Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, when the Air Force requested an analysis of a piece of wheat cake that had been cooked... aboard a flying saucer! The human being who had obtained the cake was Joe Simonton, a sixty-year-old chicken farmer who lived alone in a small house in the vicinity of Eagle River, Wisconsin. He was given three cakes, ate one of them, and thought it "tasted like cardboard."

The Air Force put it more scientifically:

The cake was composed of hydrogenated fat, starch, buckwheat hulls, soya bean hulls, wheat bran. Bacteria and radiation readings were normal for this material. Chemical, infrared and other destructive type tests were run on this material. The Food and Drug Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare concluded that the material was an ordinary pancake of terrestrial origin.

Where did it come from? The reader will have to decide for himself what he chooses to believe after reading this chapter. It includes the Eagle River incident because this is a firsthand account, given by a man of absolute sincerity. Speaking for the U.S. Air Force, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who investigated the case along with Major Robert Friend and an officer from Sawyer Ais Force Base, stated: "There is no question that Mr. Simonton felt that his contact had been a real experience."

The time was approximately 11:00 A.M. on April 18, 1961, when Joe Simonton was attracted outside by a peculiar noise similar to "knobby tires on a wet pavement." Stepping into his yard, he faced a silvery saucer-shaped object, "brighter than chrome," which appeared to be hovering close to the ground without actually touching it. The object was about twelve feet high and thirty feet in diameter. A hatch opened about five feet from the ground, and Simonton saw three men inside the machine. One was dressed in a black two-piece suit. The occupants were about five feet tall.

Smooth-shaven, they appeared to "resemble Italians." They had dark hair and skin and wore outfits with turtleneck tops and knit helmets.

One of the men held up a jug apparently made of the same material as the saucer. His motioning to Joe Simonton seemed to indicate that he needed water. Simonton took the jug, went inside the house, and filled it. As he returned, he saw that one of the men inside the saucer was "frying food on a flameless grill of some sort." The interior of the ship was black, "the color of wrought iron."

Simonton saw several instrument panels and heard a slow whining sound, similar to the hum of a generator. When he made a motion indicating he was interested in the food one of the men, who was also dressed in black but with a narrow red trim along the trousers, handed him three cookies, about three

inches in diameter and perforated with small holes.

The whole affair lasted about five minutes. Finally, the man closest to the witness attached a kind of belt to a hook in his clothing and closed the hatch in such a way that Simonton could scarcely detect its outline. Then the object rose about twenty feet from the ground before taking off straight south, causing a blast of air that bent some nearby pine trees.

Along the edge of the saucer, the witness recalls, were exhaust pipes six or seven inches in diameter. The hatch was about six feet high and thirty inches wide, and, although the object has always been described as a saucer, its actual shape was that of two inverted bowls.

When two deputies sent by Sheriff Schroeder, who had known Simonton for fourteen years, arrived on the scene, they could not find any corroborative evidence. The sheriff stated that the witness obviously believed the truth of what he was saying and talked very sensibly about the incident.

Food From Fairyland

The Eagle River case has never been solved. The Air force believes that Joe Simonton, who lived alone, had a sudden dream while he was awake and inserted his dream into the continuum of events around him of which he was conscious. I understand several psychologists in Dayton, Ohio, are quite satisfied with this explanation. So were most serious amateur ufologists of the time. Alas!

Ufology, like psychology, has become such a narrow field of specialization that the experts have no time for general culture. They are so busy rationalizing the dreams of other people that they themselves do not dream anymore, nor do they read fairy tales. If they did, they would perhaps take a much closer look at Joe Simonton and his pancakes. They would know about the Gentry and the food from fairyland.

In 1909, an American researcher named Walter Evans-Wentz, who wrote a thesis on Celtic traditions in Brittany, devoted much time to the gathering of folk tales about supernatural beings, their habits, their contacts with men, and their food. In his book The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries, for example, he

gives the story of Pat Feeney, an Irishman of whom we know only that "he was well-off before the hard times," meaning perhaps the famine of 1846-1847. One day a little woman came to his house and asked for some oatmeal:

Paddy had so little that he was ashamed to offer it, so he offered her some potatoes instead, but she wanted oatmeal, and then he gave her all that he had. She told him to place it back in the bin till she should return for it. This he did, and the next morning the bin was overflowing with oatmeal. The woman was one of the Gentry.

It is unfortunate that Paddy did not save this valuable evidence for the benefit of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Food and Drug Lab. Perhaps the lab would have explained this miracle of the multiplication of the oatmeal, along with other peculiar properties of fairy food; for it is well known in Ireland that if you are taken away by the Gentry, you must never taste food in their palace. Otherwise, you never come back; you become one of them.

It is interesting that the analysis performed for the Air Force did not mention the presence of salt in the pancakes given to Simonton. Indeed, Evans-Wentz was told by an Irishman who was quite familiar with the Gentry that "they never taste anything salt, but eat fresh meat and drink pure water." Pure water is what the saucer men took from Simonton.

The question of food in one of the points most frequently treated in the traditional literature of the Celtic legends, along with the documented stories of babies kidnapped by the elves and of the terrestrial animals they hunt and take away. Before we study this abundant material, however, we should supply some background information about the mysterious folks the Irish call the Gentry and the Scots call the Good People ( Sleagh Maith): "The Gentry are a fine large race who live out on the sea and in the mountains, and they are all very good neighbors. The bad ones are not the Gentry at all, they are the fallen angels and they live in the woods and the sea," says one of Evans-Wentz's informers.

Patrick Water gives this description of one of the beings: A crowd of boys out in the fields one day saw a fairy-man with a red cap. Except for his height he was like any other man. He was about three and a half feet tall. The boys

surrounded him, but he made such a sputtering talk they let him go. And he disappeared as he walked away in the direction of the old fort.

There were few places where one could still see such creatures, even in Great Britain or France, after 1850. All the storytellers, all the popular almanacs, agree that as civilization advanced the little folks became increasingly shy. A few untouched places recommended by Evans-Wentz, however, are the Yosemite Valley in California and the Ben Bulben country and Ross Point in County Sligo, Ireland. Dublin seers are known to have made many trips to Ben Bulben, a famous mountain honeycombed with curious grottoes. At the very foot of the mountain, "as the heavy white fog banks hung over Ben Bulben and its neighbors," Evans-Wentz was told, the following incident occurred:

When I was a young man I often used to go out in the mountains over there to fish for trout or to hunt. And it was in January on a cold, dry day while carrying my gun that I and a friend with me as we were walking around Ben Bulben saw one of the Gentry for the first time....

This one was dressed in blue with a headdress adorned with what seemed to be frills. When he came upon us, he said to me in a sweet and silvery voice, "The seldom you come to this mountain the better, Mister, a young lady here wants to take you away."

Then he told us not to fire our guns, because the Gentry dislike being disturbed by the noise.

And he seemed to be like a soldier of the Gentry on guard. As we were leaving the mountain, he told us not to look back and we didn't.

Evans-Wentz then asked for a description of the Gentry, and was told the following: The folk are the grandest I have ever seen. They are far superior to us and that is why they call themselves the Gentry. They are not a working-class, but a military-aristocratic class, tall and noble-appearing. They are a distinct race between our race and that of spirits, as they have told me. Their qualifications are tremendous: "We could cut off half the human race, but would not," they said, "for we are expecting salvation." And I knew a man three or four years ago whom they struck down with paralysis. Their sight is so penetrating that I think they could see through the earth. They have a silvery

voice, quick and sweet.

The Gentry live inside the mountains in beautiful castles, and there are a good many branches of them in other countries, and especially in Ireland. Some live in the Wicklow Mountains near Dublin. Like armies they have their stations and move from one to another.

My guide and informer said to me once, "I command a regiment."

They travel greatly, and they can appear in Paris, Marseilles, Naples, Genoa, Turin or Dublin, like ordinary people, and even in crowds. They love especially Spain, Southern France, and the South of Europe.

The Gentry take a great interest in the affairs of men and they always stand for justice and right. Sometimes they fight among themselves. They take young and intelligent people who are interesting. They take the whole body and soul, transmuting the body to a body like their own.

I asked them once if they ever died and they said, No; "we are always kept young." Once they take you and you taste food in their palace you cannot come back. They never taste anything salt, but eat fresh meat and drink pure water. They marry and have children. And one of them could marry a good and pure mortal.

They are able to appear in different forms. One once appeared to me and seemed only four feet high, and stoutly built. He said, "I am bigger than I appear to you now. We can make the old young, the big small, the small big."

The cakes given to Joe Simonton were composed of, among other things, buckwheat hulls. And buckwheat is closely associated with legends of Brittany, one of the most conservative Celtic areas.

In that region of France, belief in fairies ( fees) is still widespread, although Evans-Wentz and Paul Sebillot had great difficulty, about 1900, finding Bretons who said that they had seen fees. One of the peculiarities of Breton traditional legend is the association of the fees or korrigans with a race of beings named fions.

Once upon a time a black cow belonging to little cave-dwelling fions ruined the buckwheat field of a poor woman, who bitterly complained about the damage. The fions made a deal with her: they would see to it that she should never run out of buckwheat cakes, provided she kept her mouth shut.

And indeed she and her family discovered that their supply of cakes was inexhaustible. Alas! One day the woman gave some of the cake to a man who should not have been entrusted with the secret of its magical origin, and the family had to go back to the ordinary way of making buckwhet cakes.

The Bible, too, gives a few examples of magical food supplies, similarly inexhaustible: the so-called manna from Heaven. Moreover, stories narrated by actual people provide close parallels to this theme. Witness the following account, given by Edwin S. Hartland, a scholar of popular traditions, in his book The Science of Fairy Tales: A man who lived in Ystradfynlais, in Bredknockshire, going out one day to look after his cattle and sheep on the mountain, disappeared. In about three weeks, after search had seen made in vain for him and his wife had given him up for dead, he came home. His wife asked him where he had been for the last three weeks. "Three weeks? Is it three weeks you call three hours?" said he. Pressed to say where he had been, he told her he had been playing his flute (which he usually took with him on the mountain) at the Llorfa, a spot near the Van Pool, when he was surrounded at a distance by little beings like men, who closed nearer and rearer to him until they became a very small circle. They sang and danced, and so affected him that he quite lost himself. They offered him some small cakes to eat, of which he partook; and he had never enjoyed himself so well in his life.

Evans-Wentz also has a few stories about the food from fairyland, gathered during his trips through the Celtic countries in the first few years of the present century. John Mac Neil of Barra, an old man who spoke no English, told Michael Buchanan, who translated the story from the Gaelic for Evans-Wentz, a pretty tale about a girl who was taken by the Gentry. The fairies, he said, took the girl into their dwelling and set her to work baking cakes. But no matter how much she took from the closet, there was always the same amount left on the shelf. And she had to keep baking and baking, until the old fairy-man took pity on her and said:

I am sure you are wearying of the time and thinking long of getting from our

premises, and I will direct you to the means by which you can get your leave. Whatever remainder of meal falls from the cakes after being baked put into the meal closet and that will stimulate my wife to give you leave.

Naturally, she did as directed and got away. John Mac Neil, who was between seventy and eighty years old, gave no date to the story, but since he said he saw the girl after her experience, the event probably took place in the second part of the nineteenth century.

Scientifically inclined people scoff at such stories with a very indignant air. A group of "national" UFO investigators, when contacted about the Eagle River incident, stated that they did not intend to analyze the cookies, planned no further action, and had much more important things to investigate.

Two weeks after the sighting, Joe Simonton told a United Press International reporter that "if it happened again, I don't think I'd tell anybody about it." And indeed, if flying saucers were devices used by a superscientific civilization from space, we would expect them to be packed inside with electronic gadgetry, superradars, and a big computerrized spying apparatus. But visitors in human shape, who breathe our air and zip around in flying kitchenettes, that is too much, Mr. Simonton!

Visitors from the stars would not be human, or humanoid. They would not dare come here without receiving a polite invitation from our powerful radio-telescopes. For several centuries, they would exchange highly scientific information with experts like Dr. Carl Sagan through exquisite circuitry and elaborate codes. And even if they did come here, surely they would land in Washington, D.C., where the president of the United States and the "scientific ufologists" would greet them. Presents would be exchanged. We would offer books on exobiology, and they would give us photographs of our solar system taken through space telescopes. But perforated, cardboard-tasting, pancake-shaped buckwheat cakes? How terribly rural, Mr. Simonton!

And yet, there is no question that Joe Simonton believes that he saw the flying saucer, the flameless grill, the three men. He gave them pure water; they gave him three pancakes. If we reflect on this very simple event, as the students of folklore have reflected on the stories quoted above, we cannot overlook one possibility: that the event at Eagle River did happen, and that it has the

meaning of a simple, yet grandiose, ceremony.

This latter theory was very well expressed by Hartland, when he said, about the exchange of food with the Gentry:

Almost all over the Earth, the rite of hospitality has been held to confer obligations on its recipient, and to unite them by special ties to the giver. And even where the notion of hospitality does not enter, to join in a common meal has often been held to symbolize, if not to constitute, union of a very sacred kind.

That such meaning is still attached to a common meal is readily seen at weddings and other traditional meetings where food is an important constituent, even if the symbolic value of such events is lost to most of our contemporaries. Hartland goes so far as to suggest that the custom of burying the dead with some food might bear some relationship to the widespread belief that one must have a supply of terrestrial food when one reaches the land beyond or forsake the earth entirely. And indeed, in ancient and recent tradition alike, the abode of our supernatural visitors is not always distinct from the world of the dead. This is a moot point, however, because the same applies to visitors from heaven. The theologians, who argue about the nature of angels, know it very well. But at least the idea of food provides another connection. In the light of Hartland's remarks about the rite of hospitality, a passage from the Bible is noteworthy: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree and they did eat.

And according to Genesis 19:3, Lot took the two angels he met at the gate of Sodom to his house "and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat." So, after all, Joe Simonton's account might be a modern illustration of that biblical recommendation: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware."

Rings in the Moonlight

This section is devoted to several types of artifacts claimed by popular tradition to be of supernatural origin, such as fairy rings and saucer nests. Although such phenomena are treated as borderline cases by specialists in UFO investigation, I believe the nests deserve more than passing attention and should also be considered in the light of specific traditional beliefs about the meaning of the "magic circles" that for centuries farmers have found in their fields. The literature on this subject is abundant, and we shall select only a few cases to illustrate the point.

On Thursday, July 28, 1966, in the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Lacoste were walking in the vicinity of Montsoreau, Maine-et-Loire, France. All of a sudden, they saw a red sphere cross the sky like a meteor. It did not behave quite as a meteor, however, because it seemed to touch the ground and then rise again – and hover at mid-height for a while before it was lost to sight. A check was made for military experiments in the area. There were none.

The next day, a Montsoreau farmer, Alain Rouillet, reported that a nine-square-yard area of his wheat field had been flattened and covered with a yellowish, oily substance. Further investigation disclosed additional details on the identity of the witnesses and substantiated the idea that a peculiar object had indeed landed. Mr. Lacoste is a photographer in Saumur but, unfortunately, did not carry a camera with him at the time. He described the light given off by the sphere as being so intense that it lit up the countryside. The sphere hovered, he said, for a few seconds, then it maneuvered close to the ground. The witnesses felt sure it was a guided military gadget and walked to a distance about four hundred yards from the object, which went away and was lost to sight behind some woods. The whole sighting had lasted four minutes.

Six months earlier, a rash of similar sightings had made headlines in Australia. "More flying saucer nests!" was the big news on the front page of the Sydney Sun-Herald for January 23, 1966. Three nests had been discovered in Queensland, circular clearings of dead reeds surrounded by green reeds. Hundreds of sightseers were searching for more by the time the reports were published.

On January 19, 1966, at 9:00 A.M., a twenty-seven-year-old banana grower, George Pedley, was driving his tractor in the vicinity of a swamp called Horseshoe Lagoon when he suddenly heard a loud hissing noise. It "sounded

like air escaping from a tire," he said. Then, twenty-five yards in front of him, he saw a machine rising from the swamp. It was blue-gray, about twenty-five feet across and nine feet high. It was spinning and rose to about sixty feet before moving off. "It was all over in a few seconds; it moved at terrific speed," said Pedley. Then he found the first nest, with reeds flattened in a clockwise direction.

The Sydney Sun-Herald sent a reporter, Ben Davie, to investigate the sighting, and it was discovered that dozens of people in the area had seen strange saucer-like craft similar to the one reported by Pedley, most of them before his sighting. Davie found a total of five nests and published the following description:

I saw clearings in the reeds where "they" took off, and it was as everyone described it. In a circle roughly thirty feet in diameter reeds had been cut and flattened in a clockwise direction. One of the nests is a floating platform of clotted roots and weeds, apparently torn by tremendous force from the mud bottom beneath five feet of water.

The second and third nests had been found, respectively, by Tom Warren, a cane farmer of Euramo, and Mr. Penning, a Tully schoolteacher. They were about twenty-five yards from the first one, but hidden by dense scrub. In the third nest, which seemed quite recent, the reeds were flattened in a counterclockwise direction. All the reeds were dead, but they had not been scorched or burned. A patch of grass, about four feet square and three feet from the boundary of the first disk, had been clipped at water level, thereby adding a new element of the mystery. Altogether, the rings varied in diameter from eight to thirty feet. In all but the smallest, the reeds had been flattened in a clockwise direction.

Policemen collected samples for tests, scientists came with Geiger counters, and the Royal Australian Air Force Intelligence people were all over the place. Rumors circulated blaming the Soviets for using the vast open spaces of Australia to develop scientific ideas far ahead of the Americans. Why the Soviets could not conduct their secret testing in the vast open spaces of Siberia was not disclosed. Neither was it revealed why the pilots of the super-secret communist weapon could not resist the temptation to buzz the tractor of a twenty-seven-year-old banana grower in the capitalist world.

Fortunately, there were several natural explanations for the sighting or the nests, although only one hypothesis, suggested by a Sydney Sun-Herald reader on January 30, accounted for both. He believed the outerspace panic in Queensland was caused by a "tall shy bird with a blue body and red markings on the head." It was either a type of brolga or a blue heron, but the man did not know the correct scientific name. Many times, as he wandered barefooted though the bush, he said, he had seen the birds dancing, but they flew away at high speed before he could reach them: "They would resemble a vaporous blue cloud and would certainly make a whirring sound in flight."

Unfortunately for this pretty and imaginative theory, it got no backing from biologists. Museum ornithologist H. J. Disney thought the brolgas could not make circular depressions of symmetrical design. He was similarly skeptical about the "bald-headed coot theory" advanced by another man, Gooloogong resident Ken Adams. "I've never heard of this habit by the bird," Disney said.

Researcher Donald Hanlon has pointed out that another explanation for the nests has been proposed locally: they are the "playground of crocodiles in love." I fully share Hanlon's skepticism about this last explanation, because it could hardly apply to the nests found in Ohio, which will be discussed in a moment, or to the damaged wheat field in Montsoreau. A Queensland resident, Alex Bordujenko, who knows about the crocodiles, claims the reeds are too thick in Horseshoe Lagoon for crocodiles to move through them.

So here we are: dancing cranes are held responsible by some people for bending reeds that are so thick crocodiles, according to other people, cannot move through them. What really caused the damage? Nobody knows.

On his way home that Wednesday night, George Pedley decided he would tell no one about the "spaceship" in the swamp. He saw neither portholes nor antennae on the blue-gray object and no sign of life either inside or about it. Furthermore, he had always laughed at flying saucer stories.

But then he met Albert Pennisi, the owner of Horseshoe Lagoon, and disclosed the sighting. He was very surprised when Pennisi believed him right away and told him he had been dreaming for a week that a flying saucer would land on his property. This last detail places the Queensland saucer nests in the best tradition of the fairy-faith.

The time: six months before the Queensland experience. The place: Delroy, Ohio. On June 28, 1965, a farmer, John Stavano, heard a series of explosions. Two days later, he discovered a curious formation on the ground. When analyzed, soil and wheat samples showed no evidence of an explosion. Wheat plants seemed to have been sucked out of the ground, like the uprooted reeds in Queensland or the uprooted grass in a French landing of 1954 in Poncey.

The Ohio incident was carefully investigated by local civilian researchers. A. Candusso and Larry Moyers accompanied by Gary Davis. They found the strange circular formation on Stavano's farm, which is situated on a high point. At the center of the ring was a circular depression about twenty-eight inches in diameter. It was probed with a pinch bar, but only loose soil was found for a depth of nine inches. Much of the wheat had been removed, roots and all, and clods of soil a few inches long had been disturbed. The wheat was laid down like the spokes of a wheel; there was no swirling effects as in the Tully nests.

If we turn from Australia and Ohio to England, we are faced with another incident. As reported in The Flying Saucer Review by editor Waveney Girvan (September 1963): July 16, 1963, will long be remembered in the annals of British Ufology. Something appeared to have landed on farmer Roy Blanchard's field at the Manor Farm, Charlton, Wiltshire. The marks on the ground were first discovered by a farmworker, Reg Alexander.

They overlapped a potato field and a barely field. The marks comprised a saucer-shaped depression or crater eight feet in diameter and about four inches in depth. In the center of this depression there was found a three feet deep hole variously described as from five inches to one foot in diameter. Radiating from the central hole were four slot marks, four feet long and one foot wide. The object must have landed – if land it did – unseen, but Mr. Leonard Joliffe, a dairyman on the farm, reported he heard "a blast one morning at approximately 6 A.M."

On July 23, the London Daily Express was to report that nearly two weeks earlier, on July 10, Police Constable Anthony Penny hed seen an orange object flash through the sky and vanish near the Manor Farm field. On the basis of this limited information, it would seem quite plausible to think that the Charlton crater was caused by a meteorite. Indeed, when a small piece of metal was recovered from the hole at the center of the crater, British astronomer Patrick

Moore went to the British Broadcasting Corporation and stated categorically that the crater had been caused by a "shrimp-sized meteorite," crashing down and turning itself into a very effective explosive. This ended the mystery as far as the scientific public was concerned. But the actual facts of the matter, as they became known to a few scientists who pursued it, and to the Army engineers who were in charge of the investigation, were altogether different.

Farmer Roy Blanchard sent for the police, who, in turn, summoned the Army. Captain John Rodgers, chief of the Army bomb disposal unit, conducted most of the field investigations. His preliminary report indicated no burn or scratch marks, no trace of an explosion. And while Captain Rodgers stated that he and his superiors were baffled, farmer Roy Blanchard made further disclosures:

There isn't a trace of the potatoes and barley which were growing where the crater is now.

No stalks, no roots, no leaves. The thing was heavy enough to crush rocks and stones to powder? Yet it came down gently. We heard no crash and whatever power it uses produces no heat or noise.

Then, on July 19, it was reported that Captain Rodgers had obtained permission to sink a shaft. The readings obtained were rather unusual. They indicated a metallic object of some size, deeply embedded. And it was further learned that "detectors behaved wildly," presumably because the metallic piece in question was highly magnetic.

At this stage, it should be pointed out, the investigation was still open and aboveboard, possibly because the Army, rather than the British Air Ministry, was involved. And the Army Southern Command public relations officer at Salisbury told Girvan that the object was recovered from the hole. It was sent to a British Museum expert and promptly identified as a piece of common ironstone, "which could be found buried all over Southern England." The British Museum suggested that it had been in the ground for some time, thus eliminating the idea of a hoax. And Dr. F. Claringbull, also of the Museum, destroyed the meteorite explanation and, according to the Yorkshire Post of July 27, stated: "There is more in this than meets the eye." The last word stayed with Southern Command, however, and it commented wisely: "The cause of the phenomena is still unexplained but it is no part of the Army's task

to unravel such mysteries."

If we try to summarize what we have learned from these incidents – the Tully nest, the Ohio ring, and the Charlton crater – we can state the following: (1) public rumor associates sighting of flying saucers with the discovery of circular depressions on the ground; (2) when vegetation is present at the site, it exhibits the action of a flattering force which produces either a stationary pattern ("spokes of a wheel") or a rotating pattern (clockwise or counterclockwise); (3) some of the vegetation is usually removed, sometimes with the roots, leaves, etc.; (4) the effect of a very strong vertical force is often noticed, as evidenced by earth and plants scattered around the site; (5) strong magnetic activity has been found in one instance, where common ironstone was buried close to the center of the depression; and (6) a deep hole, a few inches in diameter, is often present at the center.

Do I need to remind the reader of that celebrated habit of the elves, to leave behind them strange rings in the fields and prairies?

One Sunday in August, as he wandered over the hills of Howth, Evans-Wentz met some local people with whom he discussed these old tales. After he had tea with the man and his daughter, they took him to a field close by to show him a "fairy-ring," and while he stood in the ring, they told him:

Yes, the fairies do exist, and this is where they have often been seen dancing. The grass never gets high in the lines of the ring, for it is only the shortest and finest kind that grows there. In the middle, fairy-mushrooms grow in a circle, and the fairies use them to sit on(!).

They are very little people, and are very fond of dancing and singing. They wear green coats, and sometimes red caps and red coats.

On November 12, 1968, the Argentine press reported that near Necochea, 310 miles south of Buenos Aires, a civilian pilot had reported a strange pattern on the ground and investigated it with several military men. Walking to the spot, where a flying saucer was earlier alleged to have landed, they found a circle six yards in diameter where the earth was calcined. Inside this circle grew eight giant white mushrooms, one of them nearly three feet in diameter. In Santa Fe province, other extraordinary mushrooms have been discovered under

similar circumstances.

Another writer, reporting on Scandinavian legends, noted that elves are depicted there as beings with oversized heads, tiny legs, and long arms:

They are responsible for the bright-green circles, called elf-dans, that one sees on the lawns.

Even nowadays, when a Danish farmer comes across such a ring at dawn, he says that the elves have come there during the night to dance.

It is amusing to note that attempts have been made, in the early days of Rationalism, to explain fairy rings as electrical phenomena, a consequence of atmospheric effects. P. Marranzino, for example, quotes a little couple by Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of the English naturalist Charles Darwin, written in 1789:

So from the dark clouds the playful lightning springs, Rivers the firm oak or prints the fairy rings.

And Erasmus Darwin adds:

There is a phenomenon, supposed to be electric, which is not yet accounted for; I mean the fairy rings, as they are called, so often seen on the grass.

At times larger parts of prominences of clouds gradually sinking as they move along are discharged on the moister parts of the grassy plains. Now this knob or corner of a cloud in being attracted to the Earth will become nearly cylindrical, as loose wool would do when drawn out into a thread, and will strike the earth with a stream of electricity perhaps two to ten yards in diameter. Just the external part of the cylinder burns the grass.

The formulation of this idea in terms of modern plasma physics will no doubt soon be provided by eager scholars. They would do well, however, to note the diameter of the cylinder mentioned by the elder Darwin: "two to ten yards" – the diameter of the average UFO.

Angels or Devils?

We have already noted several instances connecting unknown beings with the theft of agricultural products. Lavender plants, grapes, or potatoes seem to have been taken away with equal dexterity by the mysterious little men. In story after story, from North and South America and from Europe, the creatures are seen alighting from their shiny craft, picking up plants, and taking off again before amazed witnesses. Such behavior is well designed to make the investigators of such stories assume that the visitors are gathering samples with all the care and precision of seasoned exobiologists. Are we not, after all, designing robots that will continue analysis of the Martian surface begun when the Viking probe reached that planet? In a few cases, the visitors even take the time to interview the witnesses at lenght concerning agricultural techniques! Such was the case in a 1964 landing that, curiously enough, took place in Tioga City, New York, on the very day of the Socorro landing, about ten hours before Officer Zamora observed the egg-shaped, shiny object so familiar to us now.

Gary T. Wilcox, a dairy farmer, was spreading fertilizer in his field. Some time before 10:00 A.M., he stopped to check a field surrounded by woods, about a mile away from his barn. He wanted to see whether ground conditions would allow plowing. As he approached the field, however, he saw a shiny object that he first took to be a discarded refrigerator, then a wing tank or some other aircraft part. When he drew closer, he realized that the object was egg-shaped and about twenty by sixteen feet, had the appearance of durable metal, and did not look like anything he had ever seen before.

He touched it. It was not hot.

He observed no door or hatch of any kind. And yet two human-like creatures suddenly appeared.

They were about four feet tall and wore seamless clothing, with headdress and a full-face hood that did not allow Wilcox to observe any facial features. They appeared to have arms and legs. They talked to him "in smooth English," but their voices did not come from their heads, as far as Wilcox could tell, but from their bodies.

"Do not be alarmed, we have talked to people before. We are from what you people refer to as planet Mars," they said.

In spite of Gary's conviction that "someone must be playing a gag on me," the strange conversation continued. The two beings were interested in fertilizers and expressed considerable interest in their use. They stated that they grew food on Mars, but that changes in the environment were creating problems they hoped to solve by obtaining information about our agricultural techniques. Their questions were quite childlike, and they appeared to have no knowledge of the subject whatever.

Each one carried a tray filled with soil.

"When they talked about space or the ship, I had difficulty in understanding their explanations.

They said they only travel to this planet every two years and they are presently using the Western Hemisphere," Wilcox reported.

They explained that they landed only during daylight hours, "because their ship is less readily visible in daylight," and they said they were surprised Wilcox had seen their craft. They also volunteered information about space travel. Our astronauts would not be successful, they said, because their bodies would not adapt to space conditions. Finally, they requested a bag of fertilizer but, as Wilcox walked away to get it, the craft took off, disappearing from sight in a very few seconds. The witness left a bag of fertilizer at the place; the next day it was gone.

In many of the South American landings, entities have been described walking away with soil samples, plants, even boulders. Everything in their behavior seems designed to make us believe in the outerspace origin of these strange beings and their craft. And, indeed, such absurd incidents have greatly influenced the researchers, including myself, who have seriously thought that the UFOs were space probes sent by an extraterrestrial civilization.

On November 1, 1954, Mrs. Rosa Lotti-Dainelli, forty years old, was going to the cemetry at Poggio d'Ambra, Bucine, near Arezzo, Italy. A devout Italian woman, she was carrying a pot containing flowers. Her mind at that moment must have been far from science fiction speculation, yet what happened to her in the next minute constitutes perhaps the strangest of the entire wave of 1954 incidents. As Mrs. Lotti-Dainelli walked past an open grassy space, she saw a

vertical, torpedo-shaped machine with pointed edges – a machine, in other words, shaped like two cones with common bases. In the lower cone was an opening through which two small seats were visible.

The craft looked metallic. It did not resemble anything the witness had seen before.

From behind the object, two beings appeared. They were three and a half to four feet tall. They looked joyfull. Their smiles displayed white and very thin teeth. They were wearing gray coveralls and reddish leather helmets similar to those used by military drivers. They had what seemed to be a "convexity" at the center of their foreheads. Speaking an incomprehensible language, the two closed in on the woman, and one of them took the pot containing the flowers. Mrs. Lotti-Dainelli now tried to get her property back, but the two beings ignored her and returned to their craft. The witness started to scream and ran away. She returned to the spot with other witnesses, including policemen.

Too late. Not a trace of the object was left. But it seems that other people saw the craft in flight, leaving a red and blue trail.

These stories would be amazing and nothing more if it were not for one fact known to students of folklore: a constant feature of one class of legends involving supernatural creatures is that the beings come to our world to steal our products, our animals, and even – as we shall see in a later chapter – human beings. But for the moment, let us concern ourselves only with the sample-gathering behavior of these beings and their requests for terrestrial products.

In an Algonquin legend embodying all the characteristics of an excellent saucer story, a hunter beholds a "basket" that comes down from heaven. The basket contains twelve young maidens of ravishing beauty. The man attempts to approach them, but the celestial creatures quickly reenter the basket, which ascends rapidly out of sight. However, witnessing the descent of the strange object on another day, the same hunter uses a trick to come close to it and succeeds in capturing one of the girls, whom he marries and by whom he has a son. Nothing, unfortunately, can console his wife for loss of the society of her sisters, who have gone away with the flying vehicle. One day she makes a small basket, and according to Hartland, having entered it with her child she

sang the charm she and her sisters had formerly used, and ascended once more to the star from whence she had come.

She had been back in that heavenly country two years when she was told: Thy son wants to see his father; go down therefore, to the earth and fetch thy husband, and tell him to bring us specimens of all the animals he kills.

She did so. And the hunter ascended with his wife, saw his son, and attended a great feast, at which the animals he brought were served.

The Algonquin story offers a complex mixture of themse. Some of them are present in modern-day UFO stories; others derive from traditional concepts, such as the exchange of food. The new elements are: (1) the desire expressed by the celestial beings to recieve specimens of all the animals the hunter kills, and (2) the idea that sexual contact between the terrestrial and the aerial races is possible.

So far, we have seen our visitors stealing plants and requesting various items. But have they actually killed animals themselves? Have they taken away cattle? If we are to believe the stories told by many witnesses, they have. But the interesting fact is that, here again, we find a trait common to both the ufonauts and the Good People. Crowds of elves have been seen chasing cows and horses. And in the same conversation with Walter Evans-Wentz, recorded before 1909, the storyteller, "Old Patsy," told the following story about a man "who, if still alive, is now in America where he went several years ago":

In the South Island as night was coming on, a man was giving his cow water at a well, and, as he looked on the other side of a wall, he saw many strange people playing hurley. When they noticed him looking at them, one came up and struck the cow a hard blow, and turning on the man cut his face and body very badly. The man might not have been so badly off, but he returned to the well after first encounter and got four times as bad a beating.

On November 6, 1957, twelve-year-old Everett Clark, of Dante, Tennessee, opened the door to let his dog Frisky out. As he did so, he saw a peculiar object in a field a hundred yards or so from the house. He thought he was dreaming and went back inside. When he called the dog twenty minutes later, he found the object was still there, and Frisky was standing near it, along with

several dogs from the neighborhood. Also near the object were two men and two women in ordinary clothing.

One of the men made several attempts to catch Frisky, and later another dog, but had to give up for fear of being bitten. Everett saw the strange people, who talked between them "like German soldiers he had seen in movies," walk right into the wall of the object, which then took off straight up without sound. It was oblong and of "no particular color."

In another of the tantalizing coincidences with which UFO researchers are now becoming familiar, on the same day another attempt to steal a dog was made, this time in Everittstown, New Jersey.

The name of the town in the second case is almost identical to that of the witness in the first.

While the Clark case had taken place at 6:30 A.M., it was at dusk that John Trasco went outside to feed his dog and saw a brilliant egg-shaped object hovering in front of his barn. In his path he met a being three feet tall "with putty-colored face and large frog-like eyes," who said in broken English: "We are peaceful people, we only want your dog."

The strange being was told in no uncertain terms to go back where he belonged. He ran away, and his machine was seen to take off straight up some moments later. Mrs. Trasco is said to have observed the object itself from the house, but not the entity. She is also quoted as saying that when her husband tried to grab the creature, he got some green powder on his wrist, but that it washed off.

The next day he noticed the same powder under his fingernails. The ufonaut has been dressed in a green suit with shiny buttons, a green tam-o'-shanter-like cap, and gloves with a shiny object at the tip of each.

Whether the creatures come down in flying saucers or musical baskets, whether they come out of the sea or the rock, is irrelevant. What is relevant is what they say and do: the trace each leaves in the human witness who is the only tangible vehicle of the story. This behavior presents us with a sample of situations and human reactions that trigger our interest, our concern, our

laughter. Joe Simonton's pancake story is cute; the tales of fairy food are intriguing but difficult to trace; the rings and the nests are real, but the feeling they inspire is more romantic than scientific. Then there is the strange beings' desire to get hold of terrestrial flora and fauna. The stories quoted in this connection verge on the ludicrous. But to pursue the investigation further leads to horror. This is a facet of the phenomenon we can no longer ignore.

Perhaps I have succeeded in evoking a new awareness of a parallel between the rumors of today and the beliefs held by our ancestors, beliefs of stupendous fights with mysterious supermen, of rings where magic lingered, of dwarfish races haunting the land. In this chapter, I have limited the argument to the mere juxtaposition of modern and older beliefs. The faint suspicion of a giant mystery, much larger than our current preoccupation with life on other planets, much deeper than mere reports of zigzagging lights – perhaps we should try to understand what these tales, these myths, these legends are doing to us. What images are they designed to convey? What hidden needs are they fulfilling? If this is a fabrication, why should it be so absurd? Are there precedents in history? Could imagination be a stronger force, to shape the actions of men, than its expression in dogma, in political structures, in established churches, in armies? If so, could this force be used? Is it being used? Is there a science of deception at work here on a grand scale, or could the human mind generate its own phantoms, in a formidable, collective creation mythology?

"Man's imagination, like every known power, works by fixed laws." These words by Hartland, written in 1891, offer a clue. Yes, there is a deep undercurrent to be discovered and mapped behind these seemingly absurd stories. Emerging sections of the underlying pattern have been discovered and mapped in ages past by long-dead scholars. Today we have the unique opportunity to witness the reappearance of this current, out in the open – colored, naturally, with our new human biases, our preoccupation with science, our longing for the promised land of other planets.

A new mythology was needed to bridge the stupendous gap beyond the meaningless present. They are providing it. But who are they? Real beings, or the ghosts of our own dreams? They spoke to us "in smooth English." They did not speak to our scientists; they did not send sophisticated signals in uniquely decipherable codes as any well-behaved alien should before daring to

penetrate our solar system. No, they picked Gary Wilcox instead. And Joe Simonton. And Maurice Masse. What did they say? That they were from Mars. That they were our neighbors. And, above all, that they were superior to us, that we must obey them. That they were good. Go to Valensole and ask Masse. He will tell you, perhaps, as he told me, how puzzled he was when suddenly, without warning, he felt inside himself a warm, comforting feeling – how good they were, our good neighbors. The Good People. They took a great interest in the affairs of men, and they always stood for justice and right.

They could appear in different forms.

With them Joe Simonton exchanged food. So, in times gone by, did Irishmen, who talked to similar beings. In those days, too, they were called the Good People and, in Scotland, the Good Neighbors, the Sleagh Maith. What did they say, then?

"We are far superior to you." "We could cut off half the human race."

It does begin to make sense. These were the facts we have missed, without which we could never piece the UFO jigsaw together. Priests and scholars left books about the legends of their time concerning these beings. These books had to be found, collected, and studied. Together, these stories presented a coherent picture of the appearance, the organization, and the methods of our strange visitors. The appearance was – does this surprise you? - exactly that of today's UFO pilots.

The methods were the same. There was the sudden vision of brilliant "houses" at night, houses that could fly, that contained peculiar lamps, radiant lights that needed no fuel. The creatures could paralyze their witnesses and translate them through time. They hunted animals and took away people.

In The Magic Casement, a book edited by Alfred Noyes about 1910, I find this little poem by William Allingham, which I invite all ufologists to learn as a tribute to Joe Simonton: Up the airy mountain,

Down the rushy glen,

We daren't go a-hunting

For fear of little men;

Wee folk, good folk,

Trooping all together;

Green jacket, red cap,

And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore

Some make their home,

They live on crispy pancakes

Of yellow tide-foam;

## 3. The Secret Commonwealth

We are progressing, step by step, in a forest of reports and facts obscured by speculations and theories. I am trying to clear the underbrush. In the previous two chapters, order has begun to emerge. It is reassuring to find the phenomenon follows certain laws, however bizzare, and that it has puzzled our ancestors as much as it challenges us.

It would be a grave mistake to believe that we, in the late twentieth century, are the first people smart enough to recognize that the phenomenon is worthy of investigation and obeys certain fixed patterns.

I have devoted considerable time to collecting, studying, and reconstructing the detailed accounts that were aviable to serious researchers of the previous centuries and to retracing their steps. That they were scholars in theology and natural philosophy, rather than people trained in science, does not bother me. They applied the same principles. They started from stories that were reported to them; they visited the witnesses to form a personal opinion about the report; and when they were safely home, in the peace of their monastery or study, they compared the observation to those they had already gathered. They have pulled ancient books from dusty shelves just as I have. They opened Psellus alongside Paracelsus and Wier to seek the guidance of those who preceded them. It would have been as easy for them to jump to premature conclusions as it is for us to declare that UFOs are extraterrestrial visitors. They could have claimed the creatures came from the moon or were the denizens of hell. Remarkably, they kept an open mind. And they transmitted to us a surprisingly clear and fresh statement of the things seen in the sky and on the land for centuries, accounts that read like the modern reports of UFOs and alien abductions.

One of these researchers, Reverend Kirk, who lived in Scotland in the late seventeenth century, has even left us a list of sixteen concise, precise conclusions about the form of intelligence that controls the phenomenon, and the organization of the entities themselves. He calls that organization the "Secret Commonwealth."

The Ghost and The Teletype

The teletype message arrived in Dayton, Ohio, on September 9, 1966, through military channels.

The full text, about four pages long, was quite unintelligible without knowledge of the Air Force procedure for the transmission of UFO reports.

This particular message had originated at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, and was addressed to the Air Force Systems Command, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, and the Secretary. It bore the headline Unclassified Routine and the title UFO Report Is Submitted In Accordance With AFR 200-2. Kelly Air Force Base was sending something very close to a ghost story. The report made reference to two separate incidents, occurring, respectively, on August 6 and September 3, 1966, in a small Texas town. The author of the report is a father of four children. We shall call him Robert. His house is located in a fairly isolated spot, and he has never discussed the incidents with his neighbors.

On August 6, the three youngest children (ages six to nine) noticed a dark object shaped like an upside-down cup. Although it was afternoon, the children had not seen the object arrive. (These details, naturally, were not given spontaneously by the children; the story was reconstituted during the investigation.) It was dark, "without color and without lights." Then a square yellow light appeared, like a door opening, and a small creature was seen in the square of light. The entity, three to four feet tall, was dressed in black clothing that reflected a yellow or gold color. The observation lasted several minutes, then the door closed. A low humming sound became audible, and the object took off toward the northeast, rising sharply but at an unexceptional speed. At no time did the object touch the ground: it hovered at a height of about fifteen feet, near a tree, which was found undamaged, about thirty-five feet from the house.

The second sighting took place on September 3. Most of the family had gone away, but the oldest daughter had remained in the house with a friend. They were watching television in the afternoon when the set "snowed," then went out. The house was lit up with eerie red and yellow light which appeared to be circling or twirling. They looked outside and saw an object hovering in the same position, by the same tree, as in the first sighting. Its shape, again, was that of an upside-down cup, with a flat disk beneath, like a saucer. It was covered with light and departed shortly afterward. No sign of life was

apparent inside or outside the craft.

Two days later, Robert was propped up in bed. Through his door and across the hall he could see a dark doorway leading to his sons' bedroom. All of a sudden he saw a small person, three and a half to four feet tall, dressed in white, tight-fitting clothes, enter the dark bedroom. He assumed it was his small daughter going in to talk to her mother, who was in the room with his sons. About ten minutes later he saw something like a "bar of light," which appeared to crumble. He got up and went to the room, where he found his wife and the boys, who had also seen the bar of light. He did not see the person in white leave, and his wife stated that their daughter had not been in the room at any time. There was no physical evidence to substantiate the presence of the small person in the house.

The Rocks Were Full of Them

On the island of Aramore, a man named Old Patsy, whom we met in Chapter Two, told Walter Evans-Wentz a "true story about the fairies": Twenty years or so ago around the Bedd of Dermot and Grania, just above us on the hill, there were seen many fairies, crowds of them and a single deer. They began to chase the deer, and followed it right across the island. At another time similar little people chased a horse. The rocks were full of them, and they were small fellows.

Another person told Evans-Wentz:

My mother used to tell about seeing the "fair-folk" dancing in the fields near Cardigan; and other people have seen them around the Cromlech up there on the hill. They appeared as little children in clothes like soldiers' clothes and with red caps, according to some accounts.

Now, since we are getting to the central idea of this book, I will quote two more stories, both of them "landing" reports from the richest period in UFO history in terms of number of landings reported: autumn 1954. Both stories come from France.

The first case took place on October 9. Four children living in Pournoy-la-Chetive, Moselle, reported that at about 6:30 P.M., as they were roller-skating,

they suddenly saw something luminous near the cemetery:

It was a round machine, about 2.5 meters in diameter, which was standing on three legs.

Soon a man came out. He was holding a lighted flashlight in his hand and it blinded us. But we could see that he had large eyes, a face covered with hair and that he was very small, about four feet tall. He was dressed in a sort of black sack like the cassock M. le Curé wears.

He looked at us and said something we did not understand. He turned off the flashlight. We became afraid and ran away. When we looked back we saw something in the sky: it was very high, very bright and flew fast.

The second case is a classic. It happened on Sunday, September 26, in Chabeuil, Drome. At about 2:30 P.M. Mrs. Leboeuf was gathering blackberries along a hedge when: The dog began to bark and then started howling miserably. She looked around and saw the little animal standing at the edge of a wheat field, in front of something that she thought at first was a scarecrow, but going closer, she saw that the "scarecrow" was some kind of small diving suit, made of translucent plastic material, three feet tall or a little taller, with a head that was also translucent – and suddenly she realized that inside the diving suit was a Thing, and that behind the blurred transparency of the "helmet" two eyes were looking at her; at least she had the impression of eyes, but they seemed larger than human eyes. As she realized this, the diving suit began to move toward her, with a kind of quick, waddling gait.

At this point, Mrs. Leboeuf fled in terror and hid in a nearby thicket. When she tried to locate the entity, there was nothing to be seen, but all the dogs in the village were furiously barking. All of a sudden, a large metallic, circular object rose from behind some trees and took off toward the northeast. People who had heard the witness's cries soon gathered around her. At the site where the disk had been seen to rise, a circle was found, about ten feet in diameter, where shrubs and bushes had been crushed:

From one of the acacia trees at the edge of this circular imprint hung down a branch more than three inches thick, broken by pressure from above. The branch of another acacia, which hung over the circular mark eight and a half

feet above the ground, was entirely stripped of its leaves. The first few yards of wheat, in the path of the object as it took off through the field, were flattened out in radiating lines.

I hardly need underline the similarity between the depression left by this object and the various kinds of rings or nests already mentioned.

Let us now return to the fions, the dwarfish race that accompanies the korrigans, the fairies of Brittany. They are seen only at twilight or at night. Some carry a torch like a Welsh death candle.

They have swords no bigger than pins. According to French author Villemarque, a careful distinction should be drawn between korrigans and dwarfs. The latter are a hideous race of beings with dark or even black hairy bodies, with voices like old men and little sparkling black eyes.

A man who wrote to me after reading one of my books pointed out that although he was unconvinced about the existence of the unidentified flying objects, he had discovered something he thought might be of interest to me. And he continued thus: I have spent several years doing research on the Cherokee Indian, which is a branch of the Iroquois tribe. When the Cherokees migrated into the hills of Tennessee they came upon a strange race of "moon-eyed" people who could not see in the daylight. The Cherokees being unable to understand "these wretches" expelled them....

Barton in 1797 states "these people were a strange white race, far advanced, living in houses." Heywood, 26 years later, states the invading Cherokees found white people near the head of Little Tennessee with forts extending down as far as the Chickamauga creek. He gives the location of three of these forts.

Confirmation of my correspondent's report is found in Robert Silverberg's excellent book Mound Builders of Ancient America – the Archaeology of a Myth.

It would be nice to hold on to the common belief that the UFOs are craft from a superior space civilization, because this is a hypothesis science fiction has made widely acceptable and because we are not altogether unprepared, scientifically and even, perhaps, militarily, to deal with such visitors.

Unfortunately, however, the theory that flying saucers are material objects from outer space manned by a race originating on some other planet is not a good answer. However strong the current belief in UFOs from space, it cannot be stronger than the Celtic faith in the elves and the fairies, or the medieval belief in lutins, or the fear throughout the Christian lands, in the first centuries of our era, of demons and satyrs and fauns. Certainly, it cannot be stronger than the faith that inspired the early contributions to the Bible – a faith that seems rooted in personal experiences regarded as angelic visitation.

Those who assume that modern UFO sightings must be the result of alien experiments – of a "scientific" or even "superscientific" nature – conducted by a race of space travelers may be the victims of their ignorance of the old folklore. The academic pedants, through a common bias that psychologists could perhaps explain if they were not its first victims, have covered the fairy-faith with the same ridicule as other pedants now cover the UFO phenomenon. Such tales set in motion powerful mental mechanisms making acceptance of the facts very difficult. The facts in question ignore frontiers, creeds, and races, defy rational statement, and turn around the most logical expectations as if they were mere toys.

It is difficult to come to grips with the UFO phenomenon. Although it clearly evolves through phases, its effects are diffuse. We have to rely on legends, hearsay, and extrapolations.

Evans-Wentz, as we have seen, found several people in Celtic countries who had seen the Gentry or had known people who were taken by fairies. In Brittany, he had much greater difficulty: The general belief in the interior of Brittany is that the fees once existed, but that they disappeared as their country was changed by modern conditions. In the region of the Mene and of Erce (Ille-et-Vilaine) it is said that for more than a century there have been no fees and on the sea coast where it is firmly believed that the fees used to inhabit certain grottoes in the cliffs, the opinion is that they disappeared at the beginning of the last century. The oldest Bretons say that their parents or grandparents often spoke about having seen fees, but very rarely do they say that they themselves have seen fees. M. Paul Sebillot found only two who had. One was an old needlewoman of Saint-Cast, who had such fear offees that if she was on her way to do some sewing in the country and it was night she always took a long

circuitous route to avoid passing near a field known as the Couvent des Fees. The other was Marie Chehu, a woman 88 years old.

The central question in the analysis of the UFO phenomenon has always been that of the controlling intelligence behind the objects' apparently purposeful behavior. For the time being, let me simply state again that the modern, global belief in flying saucers and their occupants is identical to an earlier belief in the Good People. The entities described as the pilots of the craft are indistinguishable from the elves, sylphs, and lutins of the Middle Ages. Through the observations of unidentified flying objects, we are concerned with an agency our ancestors knew well and regarded with awe: we are prying into the affairs of the Secret Commonwealth.

Can we establish with certainty that the two beliefs are indeed identical? I believe we can. I have already given several examples of the means of transportation used by the sylphs. The ability of the Gentry to cross the continents cannot have escaped the reader's attention. But I have not yet drawn from popular folklore the stories that support most directly the idea that strange flying objects have been seen throughout history in connection with the Little People. Let us clear up this point now.

Aerial Races: Farfadets and Sleagh Maith

As late as 1850, one race of lutins survived in France, in the region of Poitou, which has been in recent years a favorite landing area for flying saucers. The lutins of Poitou were known as farfadets, and the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris contains several delightful accounts of their mischievous deeds.

What were the main characteristics of the fadets or farfadets? They were little men, very black and hairy. All day long they lived in caves, and at night they liked to get close to the farms. The literature reports that their favorite pastime was to play tricks on terrified witnesses. Their dwellings were located with some precision. C. Puichaud, for instance, has reported in a lecture that farfadets lived for a long time at La Boulardiere near Terves, Deux-Sevres, in underground tunnels. At La Boissiere, the inhabitants describe the fadets as hairy dwarfs who played all sorts of pranks.

One night in the 1850s, near the shore of the Egray River, a group of women

talked outside until about midnight. As they were returning to the village – they had just crossed a bridge – they heard a terrible noise and saw something that froze their blood. Some object – which, for lack of a better term, they called a "chariot with whining wheels" – was speeding up the hill with a marvelous velocity. It was pulled by the farfadets. The terrified women hung together as they saw the apparition. One of them, although half-dead with fear, made the sign of the cross. The strange chariot leaped up over the vineyard and was lost in the night. The women hurried home and told the story to their husbands, who decided to investigate. They bravely went to the spot as soon as the sun was up. Of course, there was nothing left to be seen.

We have already been told of the traveling habits of the Good People. What has not yet been mentioned is the belief, especially in Ireland, that human conditions are related to the travels of the Good People. Evans-Wentz says that, according to John Glynn, town clerk of Tuam: During 1846-47 the potato crop in Ireland was a failure and very much suffering resulted. At the time, the country people in these parts attributed the famine to disturbed conditions in the fairy-world. Old Tedhy Stead once told me about the conditions then prevailing, "Sure, we couldn't be any other way; and I saw the Good People and hundreds besides me saw them fighting in the sky over Knock Magh and on towards Galway." And I heard others say they saw the fighting too.

According to another popular Irish belief, the elves have two great feasts each year. The first one takes place at the beginning of spring, when the hero O'Donoghue, who used to reign over the earth, rises through the sky on a white horse, surrounded by the brilliant company of the elves. Lucky is he, indeed, the Irishman who sees him rise from the depths of the Lake of Killarney!

In another part of Europe, in January 1537, the people of Franconia, between Pabenberp and the forest of Thuringia, saw a star of marvelous size. It came lower and lower and appeared as a large white circle from which whirlwinds and patches of fire came forth. Falling to earth, the pieces of fire melted spear heads and ironwork, without causing harm to human beings or their houses.

The favorite abode of the Gentry, however, was not always an aerial one. In many tales related by the students of folklore, as in the modern literature of UFOs, the strange beings often come from the sea. Thus Evans-Wentz learned:

There is an invisible island... between Innismurray and the coast opposite Grange, on which part of the Gentry is supposed to reside. When it is visible it is only visible for a short time.

In the legends of Europe, it is between the eight and the tenth centuries that celestial prodigies were most often visible. But the books on magic and demonology associate supernatural beings with celestial signs. A strange category of devils called "Friday Demons" is thus described in The Magical Works of Henri-Corneille Agrippa. These devils are of medium height, rather handsome.

Their arrival is preceded by a brilliant star. According to the Western cabalists, the sylphs flew through the air with the speed of lightning, riding a "peculiar cloud." It is noteworthy, too, that in France some fairies are supposed to bear a luminous stone, an object that is often part of the equipment of flying saucer occupants. Many a "little man" has a light on either his belt, chest, or helmet. In a French tradition that survives in modern novels, the fortunate mortal who can steal the fairy's luminous stone is sure of lifelong happiness.

On June 17, 1790, near Alencon, France, there was an apparition so strange and so disturbing that Police Inspector Liabeuf, who witnessed the events in the presence of a doctor, the mayors of two nearby towns, and three other officials, was instructed to make a thorough investigation. His report reads, in part:

At 5:00 A.M. on June 12th, several farmers caught sight of an enormous globe which seemed surrounded with flames. First they thought it was perhaps a balloon that had caught fire, but the great velocity and the whistling sound which came from that body intrigued them.

The globe slowed down, made some oscillations and precipitated itself towards the top of a hill, unearthing plants along the slope. The heat which emanated from it was so intense that soon the grass and the small trees started burning. The peasants succeeded in controlling the fire which threatened to spread to the whole area.

This sphere, which would have been large enough to contain a carriage, had

not suffered from the flight. It excited so much curiosity that people came from all parts to see it. Then all of a sudden a kind of door opened and, there is the interesting thing, a person like us came out of it, but this person was dressed in a strange way, wearing a tight-fitting suit and, seeing that crowd, said some words which were not understood and fled into the wood.

Instinctively the peasants stepped back, in fear, and this saved them because soon after that the sphere exploded in silence, throwing pieces everywhere, and these pieces burned until they were reduced to powder.

Researchers were initiated to find the mysterious man, but he seemed to have dissolved.

Let us follow the strange beings across the world now, to Mexico, where an American anthropologist, Brian Stross, reports that the Tzeltal Indians have strange legends of their own. One night, Stross and his Indian assistant discussed these legends of the ikals, the little black beings, after seeing a strange light wandering about in the Mexican sky. The ikals are three-foot-tall, hairy, black humanoids whom the natives encounter frequently, as Stross learned: About twenty years ago, or less, there were many sightings of this creature or creatures, and several people apparently tried to fight it with machetes. One man also saw a small sphere following him from about five feet. After many attempts he finally hit it with his machete and it disintegrated, leaving only an ash-like substance.

The beings were also observed in ancient times. They fly, they attack people, and, in the modern reports, they carry a kind of rocket on their backs and kidnap Indians. Occasionally, Stross was told, people have been "paralyzed" when they came upon the ikals, who are said to live in caves, which the natives are careful not to enter.

Gordon Creighton, editor of The Flying Saucer Review, a linguistic expert, and a former diplomat with the British foreign service, had occasion to study Indian folklore during several stays in Latin America. Commenting on Stross's report, Creighton pointed out that words such as id and ikal were found in all the dialects of the May-Soke linguistic group: The Tzeltal wordsihk and ihk'al (the adjective form) simply mean black being or "black."...

In the Maya language, we find that ik means air or wind, and ikal means a spirit, while ek means black. The Kekchi Maya, in the Alta Vera Paz region of Guatemala, talk of a kek. The kek (meaning black in the Kekchi dialect of Maya) is said to be a centaur-like being that guards his patron's house at night, and frightens people at dusk. Black, ugly, hairy, he is half-human, with human hands but the hooves of a horse.

The Mexican legends show, quite conclusively, that many, perhaps every, region of the world has its own traditions about such creatures and associates them very definitely with the idea of supernatural origin. In the Tzeltal cosmology, the earth is flat and supported on four columns. At the base of these columns lives a race of black dwarfs, and Creighton points out that their blackness is due – so runs the Indian theory – to being scorched by the sun when it passes close to them every night as it travels through the underworld.

According to the Paiute Indians, California was once populated by a superior civilization, the Hav-Masuvs. Among other interesting devices, they used "flying canoes," which were silvery and had wings. They flew in the manner of eagles and made a whirring noise. They were also using a verystrange weapon: a small tube that could be held in one hand and would stun their enemies, producing lasting paralysis and a feeling similar to a shower of cactus needles. How could primitive tribes better describe the same phenomenon reported in our own time by people like Maurice Masse?

It is interesting to gather such tales in America. In Europe, the archives of the Roman Catholic Church are full of such incidents, and it cannot be doubted that many accusations of witchcraft stemmed from the belief in strange beings who could fly through the air and approached humans at dusk or at night. Occasionally, these "demons" were seen in full daylight by many people. And in this context, I am not referring to the vague confessions obtained under torture from the poor men and women who fell into the clutches of the Inquisition (although this material would be quite worthy of a parallel study.) I am quoting official records of the time, gathered from and witnessed by clerics and policemen, of which the following is typical.

In the early seventeenth century, the cathedral at Quimper-Corentin, France, had on its roof a pyramid covered with lead. On February 1, 1620, between 7:00 and 8:00 P.M., thunder fell on that pyramid, and it caught fire, exploded,

and fell down with a stupendous noise. People rushed to the cathedral from all parts of the town and saw, in the midst of the lightning and smoke, a demon of a green color with a long green tail, doing his best to keep the fire going! This account, which was published in Paris, is supplemented by a more complete version printed in Rennes. This latter version adds that the demon "was seen clearly by all, inside the fire, sometimes green, sometimes blue and yellow."

What were the authorities to do? They threw into the roaring fire a quantity of blessed objects, close to one hundred and fifty buckets of water, and forty of fifty carloads of manure – to no avail. The demon was still there, and the fire kept burning. Something drastic had to be done: a consecrated host was placed inside a loaf of bread and thrown into the flames, and then blessed water was mixed with milk given by a nurse of above-reproach conduct and spread over the demon and the burning pyramid. This the visitor could not stand; he whistled in a most horrible fashion and flew away.

I can only recommend the recipe to the U.S. Air Force, if they can find a nurse with the right qualifications.

Eight hundred years earlier (that is, about 830) in the days of Emperor Lothaire, creatures similar to the Elementals were often seen in the northern parts of the Netherlands. According to Corneil Van Kempen, they were called White Ladies. He compares them to nymphs of antiquity. They lived in caves, and they would attack people who traveled at night. The shepherds would also be harassed.

And the women who had newly born babies had to be very careful, for they were quick in stealing the children away. In their lair, one could hear all sorts of strange noises, indistinct words that no one could understand, and musical sounds.

The Sixteen Conclusions of Reverend Kirk

In the last half of the seventeenth century, a Scottish scholar gathered all the accounts he could find about the Sleagh Maith and, in 1691, wrote an amazing manuscript entitled The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies. It was the first systematic attempt to describe the methods and organization of the strange creatures that plagued the farmers of Scotland. The author, Reverend

Kirk, of Aberfoyle, studied theology at St. Andrews and took his degree of professor at Edinburgh. Later he served as minister for the parishes of Balquedder and Aberfoyle and died in 1692.

Kirk invented the name "the Secret Commonwealth" to describe the organization of the elves. It is impossible to quote the entire text of his treatise, but we can summarize his findings about elves and other aerial creatures in the following way:

1. They have a nature that is intermediate between man and the angels.

2. Physically, they have very light and fluid bodies, which are comparable to a condensed cloud. They are particularly visible at dusk. They can appear and vanish at will.

3. Intellectually, they are intelligent and curious.

4. They have the power to carry away anything they like.

5. They live inside the earth in caves, which they can reach through any crevice or opening where air passes.

6. When men did not inhabit most of the world, the creatures used to live there and had their own agriculture. Their civilization has left traces on the high mountains; it was flourishing at a time when the whole countryside was nothing but woods and forests.

7. At the beginning of each three-month period, they change quarters because they are unable to stay in one place. Besides, they like to travel. It is then that men have terrible encounters with them, even on the great highways.

8. Their chameleon-like bodies allow them to swim through the air with all their household.

9. They are divided into tribes. Like us, they have children, nurses, marriages, burials, etc., unless they just do this to mock our own customsor to predict terrestrial events.

10. Their houses are said to be wonderfully large and beautiful, but under most

circumstances they are invisible to human eyes. Kirk compares them to enchanted islands. The houses are equipped with lamps that burn forever and fires that need no fuel.

11. They speak very little. When they do talk among themselves, their language is a kind of whistling sound.

12. Their habits and their language when they talk to humans are similar to those of local people.

13. Their philosophical system is based on the following ideas: nothing dies; all things evolve cyclically in such a way that at every cycle they are renewed and improved. Motion is the universal law.

14. They are said to have a hierarchy of leaders, but they have no visible devotion to God, no religion.

15. They have many pleasant and light books, but also serious and complex books dealing with abstract matters.

16. They can be made to appear at will before us through magic.

The similarities between these observations and the story related by Facius Cardan, which antedates Kirk's manuscript by exactly two hundred years, are clear. Both Cardan and Paracelsus write, like Kirk, that a pact can be made with these creatures and that they can be made to appear and answer questions at will. Paracelsus did not care to reveal what that pact was "because of the ills that might befall those who would try it." Kirk is equally discreet on this point. And, of course, to go deeper into this matter would open the whole field of witchcraft and ceremonial magic, which is beyond my purpose in the present book.

Kirk's conclusion is that every age has left a secret to be discovered. Sooner than we think, he says, the relations with the aerial beings will be as natural to us as, say, the printing press or navigation – all things that caused considerable surprise when they were first introduced. We can only follow him in this and give a humble salute to a man who managed to gather such a complete description of our strange visitors.

It is remarkable that one cannot find a single writer who claims he knows the physical nature of the creatures. They give us their personal opinions or report on the various theories held during their time, but they do not assure us they have a final answer. To Kirk, the Good People have bodies so plyable through the Subtlety of the Spirits that agitate them, that they can make them appear or disappear at Pleasure. Some have Bodies or Vehicles so spungious, thin, and defecat, that they are fed by only sucking into some fine spirituous liquors, that pierce lyke pure Air and Oyl.

According to medieval occultists, all invisible beings can be divided into four classes: the angels, the gods of the ancients; the devils or demons, the fallen angels; the souls of the dead; and the elemental spirits, which correspond to Kirk's Secret Commonwealth. In the fourth group are the gnomes, who inhabit the earth and correspond to mine-haunting fairies, goblins, pixies, korrigans, leprechauns, and the domovoys of Russian legends, and the sylphs, who inhabit the air. These subdivisions are obviously arbitrary, and Paracelsus himself would admit it is extremely difficult to provide definitions for these various classes. The bodies of the Elementals are "of an elastic semi-material essence, etherial enough so as not to be detected by the physical sight, and they may change their forms according to certain laws." From John Mac Neil of Barra, Evans-Wentz learned: The old people said they didn't know if fairies were flesh and blood or spirits. They saw them as men of more diminutive stature than our own race. I heard my father say that fairies used to come and speak to natural people and then vanish while one was looking at them.

Fairy women used to go into houses and talk and then vanish. The general belief was that the fairies were spirits who could make themselves seen or not seen at will. And when they took people they took body and soul together.

Another man interviewed by Evans-Wentz insisted that "the fairies of the air are different from those in the rocks." Similarly, in Brittany, popular tradition divides the fairies into two groups: pygmy-sized entities endowed with magic powers and the science of prophecy; and white, aerial fairies. Beings in the first category are black, hairy; their hands terminate in talons. They have old faces and hollow eyes, small and bright like burning coals. Their voices are low as if "broken by age."

With the remark about prophecy, we are back to the relationship between the

actions of the Secret Commonwealth and human affairs. Evans-Wentz, quoting ancient poetry, says that during the last fight of the great hero of Ulster, Cuchulainn (who was a favorite of the sidhe, or fairies), one of these beings named Morrigu flew over Cuchulainn's head as he fought in his war chariot. Similarly, the fairies took part in the Battle of Clontarf (April 23, 1014), providing what would be called, in modern military language, "air cover" for the Irish side. Before the battle, a fairy-woman came to Dunlang O'Hartigan and begged him not to fight; she knew the issue could only be death (and here we find the prophetic powers of fairies again). He assured her that he was ready to die for Ireland.

As translated by W. H. Hennessy in Review Celte, the two armies met near Dublin: It will be one of the wonders of the day of judgement to relate the description of this tremendous onset. There arose a wild, impetuous, mad, inexorable, furious, dark, lacerating, merciless, combative, contentiousBadb which was shrieking and fluttering over their heads.

And there arose also the satyrs and sprites... and destroying demons of the air and firmament, and the demoniac phantom host.

Can we study modern UFO reports without reopening the entire problem of apparitions? To most UFO writers, the answer is yes. Unidentified flying objects, they argue, leave physical traces and behave like space probes. It is obvious to them that UFOs are scientific devices having nothing to do with the mystico-religious context of medieval apparitions, and nothing to do with the creatures studied by Kirk, since – as we have just seen – these latter could appear and vanish at will.

This view is no longer tenable. Reports of many recent observations do describe objects that appear and vanish. It is just that such reports are not publicized. Students of UFOs are still reluctant to publish them. And the witnesses themselves are not eager to come forward with stories they know are unbelievable. During a discussion I had with Aime Michel on this subject, Michel pointed out the negative reactions of scientists to his analysis of the French sightings. They argued that such fantastic stories could only come from deranged minds. "What would these scientists have said," he remarked, "if I had published all the data! "

Among the cases that deserve close examination, but which were swept under the rug by UFO believers themselves, is the sighting at Nouatre, France, on September 30, 1954. About 4:30 P.M. Georges Gatay, head of a team of eight construction workers, found himself walking away from the others. He felt a "peculiar drowsiness" and suddenly wondered where he was going. Then, without warning, he faced the strangest apparition. Less than thirty feet away, above him on the slope, was a man. His head was covered by an opaque glass helmet with a visor coming down to his chest. He wore gray coveralls and short boots. In his hand he held an elongated object: "It could have been a pistol, or it could have been a metal rod." On his chest was a light projector. The strange man was standing in front of a large shining dome, which "floated" about three feet above the ground. Above the cupola of the machine were objects like rotating wings or blades. Then, suddenly, the strange man vanished, and I couldn't explain how he did, since he did not disappear from my field of vision by walking away, but vanished like an image one erases suddenly.

Then I heard a strong whistling sound which drowned the noise of our excavators; the saucer rose by successive jerks, in a vertical direction, and then it too was erased in a sort of blue haze, as if by miracle.

Gatay tried to run, but he found himself helplessly nailed to the spot. He was thus "paralyzed" during the whole observation. So were seven coworkers, in a unique case of collective physiological reaction. None of them had previously believed in the reality of the so-called saucers. As soon as he was able to move again, Gatay rushed back to his men and cried, "Have you seen something?"

Mr. Beurrois told him: "Yes – a flying saucer!" And the man who was the driver of the excavator, Mr. Lubanovic, added: "There was a man dressed like a diver in front of it." Four others – Messrs. Sechet, Villeneuve, Rougier, and Amiraut, a truck driver – confirmed the details of the sighting.

It must be pointed out that the incident took place in a remote rural region. At the time the wave of French reports was just beginning. But Gatay, who fought during the war with the Resistance and was wounded in Luxembourg, stated that he was not used to flights of fancy. Following the incident, he suffered from insomnia, strong headaches, and loss of appetite for a week. Ironically,

the eight men are still not convinced that the flying saucers were alien. They feel sure they are a secret development by a terrestrial nation – probably France.

In Jalapa, Mexico, early in September 1965, a hovering object was seen with luminous slits in its circumference and a black-clad being, with eyes gleaming like cat's eyes, holding a shining metal rod. The entity vanished suddenly while under observation in a Jalapa street by a local reporter, two taxi drivers, and a bullfighter.

In the Carazinho, Brazil, case of July 26, 1965, five dwarfs dressed in dark uniforms and small boots were seen. We are told that "one of them had in his right hand a brilliantly luminous object like a wand."

There was a sudden flash of lightning about 1:45 P.M. on January 28, 1967, on Studham Common, near Whipsnade Park Zoo, an isolated spot in the Chiltern Hills in England. Rain was falling and the atmosphere was heavy, reports English researcher R. H. B. Winder, who investigated this case forThe Flying Saucer Review. Seven boys were on their way to school in the vicinity of the Dell – a shallow valley and an ideal spot for playing hide-and-seek. Alex Butler, age ten, was looking south over the Dell when he saw clearly, in the open, "a little blue man with a tall hat and a beard."

Alex called his friend, and they ran toward the figure. They were about twenty yards away when it "disappeared in a puff of smoke." The boys were very much surprised, naturally, but nothing in the attitude of the strange figure had inspired fear or suggested threat, so they kept looking for the "little blue man" and saw him again on the opposite side of the bushes from where he was first standing.

They went toward him. He vanished once more, reappearing at the bottom of the Dell. This time, they heard voices in nearby bushes and became slightly afraid. The voices reminded them of "foreign-sounding babble." Finally, they saw the man a fourth time before they were summoned to school by the whistle.

Their teacher, Miss Newcomb, noticed how excited they were and, in spite of their warnings that she would never believe them, immediately separated them and made each of the seven boys write down his experience in his own words.

The essays were then gathered into a book called The LittleBlue Man on Studham Common, which notes Winder, makes fascinating reading and no doubt "will occupy an honored place in the archives of the Studham Village Primary School."

Investigation disclosed a number of local sightings – among them two landings in the vicinity of the spot – within a few months of the January sighting. Naturally, the investigators were most interested in hearing the boys themselves give details on the appearance of the creature. Winder reports: They estimate the little man at 3 ft. tall (by comparison with themselves) with an additional 2 ft. accounted for by a hat or helmet best described as a tall brimless bowler, i.e., with a rounded top. The blue color turned out to be a dim greyish-blue glow tending to obscure outline and detail. They could, however, discern a line which was either a fringe of hair or the lower edge of the hat, two round eyes, a small seemingly flat triangle in place of a nose, and a onepiece vestment extending down to a broad black belt carrying a black box at the front about six inches square. The arms appeared short and were held straight down close to the side at all times. The legs and feet were indistinct.

As for the "puff of smoke," it apparently was a whirling cloud of yellowish-blue mist shot toward the pursuers.

The Magic Casement

The Reverend Robert Kirk makes no bones about it: the elves did at one time occupy the land.

Today it is still a common belief in the north of Scotland that the sith or fairy people existed once, a belief that survives in their title "Good Neighbors," although they could also be hostile to man: While the Sith had no inborn antagonism towards human beings, and were occasionally known to do good turns to their favourites, they were very quick to take offence, capricious in their behavior and delighted in playing tricks on their mortal neighbors. These cantrips had to be patiently endured, as resistance or hostility might lead to dreadful reprisals – the kidnapping of children or even adults. An attitude of passive friendliness on the human side was therefore assumed to be eminently desirable.

Sir Walter Scott refers to this when Bailie Nicol Jarvie, in Rob Roy, tells his companion, as they pass a fairy-hill near Aberfoyle:

They ca' them... Daoine Sith, which signifies, as I understand, men of peace: meaning thereby to make their gudewill. And we may e'en as well ca' them that too, Mr. Osbaldistone, for there's nae gude in speaking ill o' the laird within his ain bounds.

A Gaelic scholar, Campbell, minister of Tiree, published a story called "Na Amhuisgean – The Dwarfs of Pigmies," in which he remarks:

The existence of pigmies in some unknown region bordering upon, if not forming part of, the "kingdom of coldness" is of interest as indicating some of the connection between smallness of person and cold climate, and so leading to the speculations as to the first dispersion of the human race and connection of tribes that are now far removed from each other in appearance, dress, mode of life, and dialects.

Although the connection between climate and size is not very tenable, Campbell's remarks do open the way to interesting speculations. He notes that the term Lapnach applies to a certain "little, thickset, insignificant man" who figures in many tales, and he adds: There are many traditional tales in the Highlands of much interest... in which little men of dwarfish, and even pigmy size, figure as good bowmen, slaying men of large size, and powerful make, by their dexterity in the use of the bow and arrow.

In spite of their small size, they are understood to have been of very considerable strenght. They were not "undersized in the same way that children are, but full-grown individuals, undersized and sinewy, or muscular."

These dwarfs or pygmies are called Na Amhuisgean or, more correctly, Na h-Amhuisgean. The English phonetics for the Gaelic amhisg would be "awisk." The same beings are sometimes found under the names Tamhaisgand Amhuish, and these words uniformly designate dwarfs. It is ironic, therefore, that in one tale ("The Lad with the Skin Garments," quoted by folklore researcher MacDougall) the awisks address a human intruder as "O little man" while he in turn calls them "big men all."

Were there or were there not races of dwarfs living among the West and Middle Europeans of antiquity? Were the legends about the fairies and the elves based on the fact that the ancient inhabitants of the northern parts of the British Isles were such a race? Historical and archaeological researchers definitely say no. Yet several writers, such as folklore scholar David MacRitchie, claim there are indications in this direction.

In Tyson's Essay Concerning the Pygmies of the Ancients, published in London in 1894, Professor Windle, of Birmingham, re marks that a race of dwarfs supplied the best warriors and bodyguards of several kings. Tyson made an extensive study of the dwarf races and quotes the Greek historian Ctesias:

Middle India has black men, who are called Pygmies, using the same language as the other Indians... Of these Pygmies, the king of the Indians has three thousand in his train; for they are very skillful archers.

And he adds:

There seem to have been near Lake Zerrah, in Persia, Negrito [pygmy black] tribes who are probably aboriginal, and may have formed the historic black guard of the ancient kings of Susania.

Tyson's work, to which Windle provided the preface, was written in the seventeenth century. After calling attention to the remark by Ctesias, it goes on: Talentonius and Bartholine think that what Ctesias relates of the Pygmies, as their being very good archers, very well illustrates this Text of Ezekiel.

The Ezekiel text in question appears thus in the King James Bible: The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims were in thy towers....

And indeed, the English Bishops' Bible of 1572 and 1575 does not have "Gammadims" but "Pygmenians." Without going into further detail, it is clear that the Gaelic story of a guard of dwarf warriors is not an isolated case.

If we return now to David MacRitchie's quotation from the Flemish folklore journal Ons Volksleven, we can learn more:

The Fenlanders (a race dwelling in our country prior to the Kelts) were little, but strong, dexterous, and good swimmers, they lived by hunting and fishing. Adam of Bremen in the eleventh century thus pictures their descendants or race: "They had large heads, flat faces, flat noses, and large mouths. They lived in caves of rocks, which they quitted in the nighttime for the purpose of committing sanguinary outrages." The Keltic people, and later those of German race, so tall and strong, could hardly look upon such little folk as human beings. They must have regarded them as strange, mysterious creatures. And when these negroes or Fenlanders had lived for a long enough time hidden, for fear of the new people, in their grottoes, especially when they at lenght fell into decay through poverty, or died out, they became changed in the imagination of the dreamy Germans into mysterious beings, a kind of ghosts or gods.

In a footnote, MacRitchie states that he is "not aware on what grounds this author speaks of them as black people," but he admits that these dwarfish Fenlanders might be regarded as the originals of the awisks of the Gaelic legend.

A tradition in the Orkney Isles offers a parallel to the above story. Sometime in the first part of the fifteenth century, Bishop Thomas Tulloch of Orkney gave details, in De Orcadibus Insulis, of the tradition that the archipelago had been inhabited six centuries earlier by the Papae and a race of dwarfs.The Papae were the Irish priests. And the dwarfs were the Picts. In this, MacRitchie follows Barry's Orkney, where we read:

They are plainly no other than the Peiths, Picts, or Piks.... The Scandinavian writers generally call the Piks Peti, or Pets: one of them uses the term Petia, instead of Pictland (Saxo-Gram.); and besides, the firth that divides Orkney from Caithness is usually denominated Petland Fiord in the Icelandic Sagas of histories.

The consistency running through these ancient accounts, MacRitchie says, is indeed remarkable.

The Irish priests followed St. Columba, who himself was a great-grandson of Conall Gulban, who, tradition states, had fierce battles with a race of dwarfs. Conall Gulban's fights with the dwarfs indeed are the origin of a series of tales sometimes attributed to other legendary heroes. If we try to get as close as

possible to the original story, this is what we get: According to J. F. Campbell of Islay, Conall Gulban was the son of the famous Neil, the ancestor of the O'Neills of Ulster. He was the great-grandfather of St. Columba. His adventures begin in the northwest of Ireland, "somewhere in the dawn of the fifth century." After various experiences, Gulban landed in the "realm of Lochlann," generally believed to be Scandinavia, which itself had a rather vague meaning at the time. There Gulban was intrigued by a strange construction and asked his guide: "What pointed house is there?"

"That is the house of the Tamhaisg, the best warriors that are in the realm of Lochlann," the guide replied.

"I heard my grandfather speaking about the Tamhaisg," said Conall, "but I have never seen them. I will go to see them."

"It were not my counsel to thee!" were the guide's last words.

This advice, naturally, Conall Gulban disregarded. He went straight to the palace of the King of Lochlann and challenged him to combat. He was told, as recorded by Campbell of Islay: He should get no fighting at that time of night, but he should get lodging in the house of the amhusg (awisks), where there were eighteen hundred amhusg, and eighteen score.... He went, and he went in, and there were none of the amhuish within that did not grin. When he saw that they had made a grin, he himself made two.

"What was the meaning of your grinning at us?" said the amhusg.

"What was the meaning of your grinning at me?" said Conall. Said they, "Our grinning at thee meant that thy fresh royal blood will be ours to quench our thirst, and thy fresh royal flesh to polish our teeth." And, said Conall, "The meaning of my grinning is, that I will look out for the one with the biggest knob and slenderest shanks, and knock out the brains of the rest with that one, and his brains with the knobs of the rest."

Evidently, the little men of that particular time and place had not yet invented their paralyzing ray!

The tale of Conall Gulban, recorded by Campbell of Islay in West Highland

Tales, continues with many wonderful fights in other lands. In France, for example, Conall wins in the same absurd way over "the house of the Tamhaisg, the best warriors that the King of France had." MacRitchie concluded:

It is of course to be understood that the passage as it stands is as impossible as it is ludicrous. But this does not interfere with the assumption that the basis of the story may be an actual encounter between men of tall stature and a race of dwarfs; the excessive number of the latter, and the ease with which the hero swings them about, being merely the embroidering of tale-tellers in later times.

As for the seeming impossibility that a tale could be transmitted for fifteen centuries and yet be historical, MacRitchie adds:

It ought to be remembered that the oral transmission of history and genealogy, with the most careful attention to language and details, was a perfect science among the Gaelic-speaking peoples.

But, then, what became of the dwarfish race? According to MacRitchie inScots Lore (1895), the dwarfs were destroyed or went into hiding toward the sixth century, when Columba and his followers carried on a religious war against the Picts. At the same time, he says, the Irishmen were also using force against the same people in the north of Ireland. And since the new owners of the land felt for their ancient enemies a mixture of guilt and fear, numerous rumors were born concerning the ghosts of the Picts, still roaming through the land. And this in turn led to the elves and fairies. This theory – generally referred to as the "pygmie theory" – is no longer tenable in the face of the evidence historians have gathered about the Picts.

The name "Picti," according to Wainwright in The Problem of the Picts(1955), appears first in 297 A.D., and from that time on, it is applied to all the peoples who lived north of the Antonine Wall and were not Scots. We are really concerned with the predecessors of the Picts, who formed various groups called "Proto-Picts." Could MacRitchie's pygmies have figured among the Proto-Picts?

Should we believe that, among the Proto-Picts, there were dwarfs who were mistaken for a native people? And, then, where did they come from? MacRitchie's theory offers only confusion, and it is amusing to observe his

embarrassment when he must report that the Fenlanders were not only dwarfish, but black, too. Could it be that there were ikals in Northern Europe at the dawn of recorded history?

In his conclusion to his discussion of the pygmie theory, which he rejects as Hartland does, Evans-Wentz remarks that it leaves all the problems of the historical origins of the fairy-faith unsolved, since it is clearly global, not limited to the Celtic lands. Thus A. Lang, in his introduction to the 1922 edition of Kirk's book, states that "to my mind at least, the subterranean inhabitants of Mr. Kirks's book are not so much a traditional recollection of a real dwarfish race living underground (a hypothesis of Sir Walter Scott's) as a lingering memory of the chthonian beings, the Ancestors."

Folklore in the Making

No matter how interesting it may be to speculate on the origin of these ancient beliefs, the opportunity to observe folklore in the making is even more attractive. When modern rumors fall into the very same patterns that have puzzled generations of scientists, theologians, and literary scholars, the feeling one gets is a mixture of wonder and delight. When the phone rings in Wright Patterson Air Force Base and a local intelligence office transmits the observation of a motorist who has just seen what he describes as a flying saucer with strange hairy dwarfs on the side of the road, we are witnessing the unique conjunction of the modern world – with its technology – and ancient terrors with all the power of their sudden, fugitive, irrational nature. We are in a very priveleged position. Neither Evans-Wentz nor Hartland was able to interview people who had just observed the phenomena they studied. Most of their witnesses spoke of days gone by, of stories heard by the fireplace. In contrast, we feel that we can almost reach out into the night and grab those lurking entities. We are hot on their trail; the air is still vibrating with excitement, the smell of sulphur is still there when the story is recorded.

Take, for instance, the story of the Air Force colonel who was driving at night on a lonely Illinois road when he noticed a strange object was flying above his car. It looked, he said, like a bird, but it was the size of a small airplane. Itflapped its wings and flew away. This is the type of horror story adolescents sometimes tell when they come home late and a bit nervous. But an Air Force colonel?

During November and December, 1966, West Virginia was plagued by a similar "bird," called "the Mothman" by imaginative reporters. One witness, twenty-five-year-old Thomas Ury, who lives in Clarksburg, met the creature at 7:15 A.M., on November 25, 1966, in the vicinity of Point Pleasant.

It was a large gray thing that rose from a nearby field. "It came up like a helicopter and veered over my car," Ury told American researcher John Keel, a dedicated investigator who spent many days in the area analyzing the reports. Ury accelerated up to 75 m.p.h., but the "bird" was still there, casually circling the car. It appeared to be about six feet long, with a wingspread of eight to ten feet.

According to other witnesses quoted by Keel, the figure had large, round, glowing red eyes.

On January 11, 1967, Mrs. McDaniel saw the "Bird" herself in broad daylight. She was outside her home when she observed what appeared to be a small plane flying down the road almost at treetop level. As it drew close she realized it was a man-shaped object with wings.

It swooped low over her head and circled a nearby restaurant before going out of sight.

Mrs. McDaniel is known in the community as a rational and responsible person.

Now consider this report:

The intruder was tall, thin and powerful. He had a prominent nose, and bony fingers of immense power which resembled claws. He was incredibly agile. He wore a long, flowing cloak, of the sort affected by opera-goers, soldiers and strolling actors. On his head was a tall, metallic-seeming helmet. Beneath the cloak were close-fitting garments of some glittering material like oilskin or metal mesh. There was a lamp strapped to his chest. Oddest of all: the creature's ears were cropped or pointed like those of an animal.

Was it a prankster in Batman dress? It seems entirely possible, especially when we take into account the fact that the "bird" was carrying something on its

back and made incredible leaps – actually flying on one occasion. There is only one trouble with this explanation: the latter episode took place not in West Virginia in 1966 but in the dark lanes of a London suburb in November 1837. Like the Mothman of Point Pleasant, the mysterious flying man of London was ignored by authorities as long as possible. Finally, a resident of Peckham wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor, and the censorship could no longer be maintained. Nightly, horse patrols searched the countryside; Admiral Codrington set up a reward fund (still unclaimed, by the way). And J. Vyner, in a remarkable article about the mystery, informs us that even "The old Duke of Wellington himself set holsters at his saddle bow and rode out after dark in search of Springheel Jack."

On February 20, 1838, a woman of eighteen, Jane Alsop of Old Ford, London, heard a violent ringing of the front door bell. Going out, she faced the "most hideous appearance" of Springheel Jack. He wore shining garments and a flashing lamp on his chest. His eyes resembled glowing balls of fire. When Miss Alsop uttered a cry, the intruder grabbed her arm in claw-like fingers, but her sister rushed to her rescue. The visitor spurted a fiery gas in Jane's face, and she dropped unconscious. Then Jack fled, dropping his cloak, which was picked up at once by another shadow who ran after him.

Two days earlier, though not revealed until after the Old Ford incident had made headlines, a Miss Scales, of Limehouse, was walking through Green Dragon Alley. The alley was a dim-lit passage beside a public house, and when she saw a tall figure lurking in the shadows Miss Scales hesitated, waiting for her sister who had fallen behind.

The sister, who described the loiterer as "tall, thin and (save the mark) gentlemanly," came up in time to see his long cloak thrown aside, and a lantern flashing on the startled girl.

There was no time to scream; Jack's weird blue flame spurted into his victim's face and she dropped to the ground in a deep swoon. Whereupon, Jack walked away calmly.

Vyner suggests that Jack had a rendezvous in Green Dragon Alley and wanted to get rid of witnesses. A week after the Old Ford incident, he knocked on the door of Mr. Ashworth's house in Turner Street and inquired for him. The

servant who opened the door screamed. Jack fled. He was never seen again, in the London neighborhood at least. Had a contact been made? It is strange indeed, as Vyner remarks, that Springheel Jack should have paid two visits within two days to houses less than a mile apart, whose owners were named Alsop and Ashworth, respectively. Two of the main witnesses, as in West Virginia, were young women. With them, in the two cases, were their sisters. There seems to be a pattern here. But, rather typically, it is once again an absurd one.

In 1877, wearing tight garments and shining helmet, Jack was seen again at Aldershot, Hampshire, England. On that occasion he flew above two sentries, who fired at him. He answered with a burst of blue fire, which left them stunned, and vanished. Vyner believes that Jack was again to blame for the scare in late August 1944, in Mattoon, Illinois. He was seen at night peering through windows "as in search for someone known to him by sight." Most of the witnesses were women; some of them reported falling unconscious after a device was pointed at them by the visitor, who left a strange cloying smell.

In the spring of 1960, Italian jeweler Salvatore Cianci was driving in Sicily, near Syracuse, when a small being in shining clothes wearing a diving helmet appeared in the beam of the headlights. It had no arms but two "little wings." Mr. Cianci suffered a nervous shock.

On Saturday, November 16, 1963, four teenagers were walking near Sandling Park, near Hythe, Kent, England. One of the four, seventeen-year-old John Flaxton, describes how they were frightened by an object they first had taken to be a star: It was uncanny. The reddish yellow light was coming out of the sky at an angle of sixty degrees. As it came towards the ground it seemed to hover more slowly.

A bright golden light suddenly appeared in the field near them, after the first object had been hidden by some trees:

It was about eighty yards away, floating about ten feet above the ground. It seemed to move along with us, stopping when we stopped as if it was observing us. The light was oval, about fifteen to twenty feet across with a bright, solid core.

It disappeared behind trees and a few seconds later a dark figure shambled out. It was all black, about the size of a human but without a head. It seemed to have wings like a bat on either side and came stumbling towards us. We didn't wait to investigate.

Folklore in the making. From the farfadets, we have drifted to modern times, with Springheel Jack and the Mothman. And we have seen our visitors' arsenal become more precise. Jack's lantern and ray gun have survived in modern tales, in twentieth-century comic books, in television series. But the real question is: Could all this be real? And, if not, how can we explain the consistency of these descriptions, at a time when there were no comics and no television?

The Italian artist R. L. Johannis had a remarkable experience in 1947, at a time when the name "flying saucer" was already popular in the United States but when documentation about landings was nonexistent. The date was August 14. He was hiking alone, following a small stream in the mountainous region between Italy and Yugoslavia. Among some rocks, he suddenly saw a large, brilliant red, lens-shaped object, about ten yards in diameter. Close to it, he discovered two people, whom he first regarded as "kids" until he realized they were dwarfs – of a type he had never seen before.

The two beings were under three feet tall; their heads were larger than a man's head. They had no hair, eyelashes, or eyebrows. Their faces were greenish, their noses straight, their mouths wide slits, giving them something of the appearance of a fish. Their eyes were huge, round, and prominent, their color yellow-green. The skin around their eyes formed rings rather than eyelids. As Johannis moved, one of the beings touched his belt. At once from the center of the belt something like a ray and a puff of vapor were emitted. Johannis experienced an electrical discharge and found himself on the ground, helpless, and very weak. It took all his energy to turn his head and observe the two beings as they walked away. A moment later they were gone.

In 1965 a case very similar to Johannis's was reported to the U.S. Air Force. Dr. J. Allen Hynek and I tried in vain to get an active investigation of it by Project Blue Book, the U.S. Air Force's investigations of UFO sightings in the 1960s. Finally the case was leaked, at my suggestion, to a civilian group which conducted a speedy and careful study of the testimony given by the only

witness, a Mr. S. The details of the testimony are now aviable in an excellent book by the leaders of the civilian group, the Lorenzens. Called by the Lorenzens the "most spectacular report we have examined," the incident took place on September 4, 1964, in the mountains of northern California, about eight miles from Cisco Grove. Mr. S. was hunting when he became separated from the hunting party and lost his way. Night was falling, so he lit some fires to show his position.

Soon he observed a light in the sky, which he thought was a helicopter looking for him. When it stopped and hovered silently nearby, however, he realized it was an unusual object and climbed a large tree to observe from that vantage point. The light circled the tree. He saw a flash and a dark object falling to the ground.

Next he noticed one figure crashing through the woods below him and another moving in from a slightly different direction. Both figures approached the tree and looked at him. They were a little over five feet tall, the witness estimates, and clothed in a silvery uniform that covered their heads. A third creature appeared later, behaving more like a mechanical being than an animal or man. It was darker and had two reddish-orange "eyes." It had no mouth, but rather a slit-like opening that would drop open like an oven door.

For the rest of the time Mr. S. was conscious, the entities used a variety of means to try to get him to fall from the tree. He managed to keep them away by throwing lighted bits of paper and clothing at them, to which they reacted in fear. The main weapon used against him was a very curious one. If we are to believe this report, the "robot-like" entity would let its lower "jaw" drop, then place its "hand" inside the rectangular cavity thus revealed, and emit a puff of smoke in Mr. S.'s direction.

The smoke spread like a mist and, upon reaching him, made him lose consciousness. The effects of it was comparable to being suddenly deprived of oxygen, Mr. S. said.

The story is hard to believe: Would not such beings be able to climb a tree? If they came out of a flying saucer, why could they not fly up to his refuge? But it is equally difficult to prove that Mr. S. simply had a nightmare. The witness is not given to such behavior, and when he woke up at dawn, still tied to the tree

with his belt, all the objects he had thrown at the intruders were still lying around. Furthermore, there is the description of the strange, powerful gas, which plays such an important role in the story, as it does in the incidents related to Springheel Jack, the Johannis sighting, and the Sonny Desvergers case of August 1952.

According to Captain Ruppelt's report of his investigation in Florida, Desvergers, a scoutmaster, found himself breathing the same peculiar gas when he entered a wood to investigate a strange light and faced, he said, a horrible being who looked at him from the turret of a flying machine unlike anything he had ever seen.

He froze where he stood and noticed a small ball of red fire began to drift toward him. As it floated down it expanded into a cloud of red mist. He dropped his light and machete, and put his arms over his face. As the mist enveloped him, he passed out.

This is confirmed by the unpublished memorandum written by Ruppelt on September 12, 1952, upon his return from West Palm Beach. Captain Ruppelt and Lieutenant R. M. Olsson began their investigation on the morning of September 9.

A conference was held with Capt. Corney to determine whether or not there had been any late developments in this case that the two ATIC officers were not familiar with. Capt. Corney stated that to his knowledge there was nothing outstanding that had happened. He was asked about the facts of supposedly anonymous threatening telephone calls that Mr. Desvergers had recieved. He stated that Desvergers had called him approximately two weeks ago and stated that he had been receiving anonymous threatening telephone calls while at work in the establishment in which he is employed. The gist of the calls was telling Desvergers to lay off of his story and that if he didn't he would be sorry and several other things.

Not much attention was given to this claim, however, and Ruppelt continued his investigations by interviewing people who knew the scoutmaster and especially the members of the scout group who were with him in the car when he decided to go into the woods: He gave the boys instructions to go get help if he wasn't back in ten minutes and started in the woods. The boys claimed that

they could see his flashlight going back into the woods.

From this point on, the boys' stories varied to a certain degree.

The first boy states:

He did not see the first light that Desverges saw, however, shortly afterwards, after Desverges had got out, made the statement about flying saucers, and got back into the automobile, he looked out of the window and saw a semicircle of white lights about three inches in diameter [sic] going down at an angle of 45 degrees into the trees. None of the other boy scouts saw this. He then states that he saw Desvergers go back into the woods and that the next thing that he saw was a series of red lights in the clearing.... As soon as he saw the red lights he claims that he saw Sonny "stiffen up" and fall.

According to two other boys:

They both saw Desvergers going through the woods, could see flashlights flashing on the trees and then disappeared for a few seconds, at least the light disappeared. The next thing they saw was a series of red lights. They said they looked a lot like flares or sky rockets. The lights were not making any definite pattern, some of them were going up, some of them going down, or going around and around in all directions. It just seemed to be a type of six or eight red lights going in all directions. This time they ran down the road to get help.

Here we have confirmation of the red lights. The witnesses were not close enough, however, to experience the effects, but it is interesting to remark that the lights kept "going around and around" after the scoutmaster (according to his own account of the incident) was already unconscious.

It is also interesting to note, in this connection, that over a century ago Leroux de Lincy, in his Livre des Legendes, had this to say about the elves:

If a mortal being dares come near them, they open their mouth and, struck by the breath which escapes from it, the imprudent fellow dies poisoned.

On October 7, 1954, Mr. Margaillon saw an object that had landed in a field in Monteux, France. It was shaped like a hemisphere, about two and a half yards

in diameter. The witness gasped for air and felt paralyzed during the observation. The sudden lack of air noted in the Cisco Grove case is frequently reported by witnesses of landings, as are the peculiar eyes of the small entities: reddish-orange, glowing in the dark.

On October 9, 1954, in Lavoux, Vienne, France, a farmer who was riding his bicycle suddenly stopped as he saw a figure, dressed in a sort of "diving suit," aiming a double light beam at him. The individual, who seemed to have "boots without heels," very bright eyes, and a very hairy chest, carried two "headlights," one below the other, on the front of his suit.

Nine days later, in Fontenay-Torcy, also in France, a man and his wife reported that they saw a red cigar-shaped object in they sky. All of a sudden, it dived toward them, leaving a reddish trail, and landed behind some bushes. Upon reaching the top of a hill, the witnesses found themselves confronted by a bulky individual, human in appearance but only about three feet tall. He wore a helmet, and his eyes glowed with an orange light. One of the witnesses lost consciousness. Four other people saw the object in flight from another spot. A third group of independent witnesses in another town, Sanson-la-Poterie, saw the craft fly away west at tremendous speed. The countryside was illuminated over an area one to two miles wide.

It is indeed appropriate to tell the investigator of such cases (in the words of Robert Herrick's "The Night-Piece of Julia"):

Her eyes the Glow-worme lend thee,

The Shooting Starres attend thee;

And the Elves Also,

Whose little eyes glow

Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

The UFO occupants, like the elves of old, are not extraterrestrials. They are the denizens of another reality.

Some in the reeds

Of the black mountain-lake,

With frogs for their watch-dogs,

All night awake.

# PART TWO: ANOTHER REALITY

During the drive between Burford and Stratford I had some startling and, to me, novel insights into what I can only describe as the Nature of Reality. They were connected in some way to this shining disk, and have had a profound effect on me, causing what is commonly known as a personality change. I won't try to explain what those insights were since almost all the religions of the world have tried to do this and have failed.

Letter to the author from a UFO witness

The central question posed by the UFO phenomenon is this: What happens to the witnesses who have a close encounter? Are the "abductions" real? And, if so, where do these people go?

Here again it is udeful to take the stories out of the twentieth-century North American context and to relate them to the larger universe of reports from other times and other places. The Secret Commonwealth, after all, already took ordinary folks away. So did the denizens of Magonia, and the sky people of American Indian lore.

Part Two of this book is concerned with the direct interaction between humans and these alleged beings – with what we know of their physical reality and their impact on us.

As we progress from chapter to chapter in this search, the reader will see the outline of a major fact towering above the haze of human theories and fragile dreams. This is not simply a case of a few tales relating encounters between a few humans and strange creatures from the sky. This is an age-old and worldwide myth that has shaped our belief structures, our scientific expectations, and our view of ourselves.

I do not use the word myth here to mean something that is imaginary, but on the contrary something that is true at such a deep level that it influences the very basic elements of our thoughts. There are four components to the myth: an emotional component, examined in Chapter Four, which takes the form of

cosmic seduction, including some stories of sexual encounters that may seem shocking or outrageous but form a significant part of the total problem. Next, in Chapter Five, we find the celestial component that encompasses the heavenly signs, the claims of contact with angels and with the creatures of other planets – in other words, the entire tapestry of outside intervention in human affairs. I am careful to use the quaint word celestial here instead of the more precise and convenient extraterrestrial because of the unfortunate misconceptions the latter term now carries in our culture.

In Chapter Six we examine the most difficult topic of UFO research: the psychic component in the sightings. It is an aspect of the phenomenon that all the official studies, and most of the private ones, have tried to avoid, but it is there, and we can no longer close our eyes and minds to it.

Ordinary logic does not apply to the paranormal. I have coined the word metalogic to describe the internal consistency of the experience, which often involves observations that are, on the surface, logically absurd.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, we come to the most powerful and frightening aspect of the UFO myth: the spiritual component that has given us what I have termed a "morphology of miracles." From the Pillar of Fire and the Burning Bush to apparitions of the Virgin at Fatima and Joseph Smith's visions of Angel Moroni, all the major miracles recorded in human history fit under the mythical framework we have erected. Far from finding it satisfying, I react to this observation with a mixture of awe and humility before the very dimensions of the problem we are attempting to describe with limited human understanding, with scientific resources that have not been tempered by the fiery tricksters of the underworld or brushed by the inspired guidance of the wings of archangels.

## 4. The Emotional Component: Cosmic Seduction

The Case of Gerry Irwin

In his book on the folklore of Celtic countries, Walter Evans-Wentz reports that the mind of a person coming out of FairyLand is usually blank about what has been seen and done there. The same is true in many modern UFO reports. The mind of Private First Class Gerry Irwin was blank indeed when he woke up on March 2, 1959, in Cedar City Hospital. He had been unconscious for twenty-three hours, at times mumbling incoherently something about a "jacket on the bush." When he became conscious his first question was: "Were there any survivors?"

The story of Private Irwin is mysterious, and very little has been done to clarify it. It has been mentioned only once in UFO literature, by the late James Lorenzen, director of the APRO group, and has not, to the best of my knowledge, been the subject of subsequent investigation. Such an investigation, however, would throw light on the sociological context of UFO reports. Perhaps, as Lorenzen suggests, there was a military investigation that has been kept secret. If so, secrecy on the part of the authorities, if they are really concerned with the nation's peace of mind, is not the best course. The well-established facts of the Irwin case, which serves as our introduction to a discussion of the problem or "contact," makes it clear that open research is now imperative on all aspects of the phenomenon.

Late on February 28, 1959, Gerry Irwin, a Nike missile technician, was driving from Nampa, Idaho, back to his barracks at Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas. He had reached Cedar City, Utah, and turned southeast on Route 14 when he observed an unusual phenomenon six miles after the turnoff. The landscape brightened, and a glowing object crossed the sky from right to left. Irwin stopped the car and got out. He watched the object continue to the east until hidden from view by a ridge.

The witness decided that he might have seen an airliner on fire attempting a forced landing, in which case there was no time to lose. Consequently, instead of resuming his journey, Irwin wrote a note ("Have gone to investigate

possible plane crash. Please call law enforcement officers.") and placed it on the steering wheel of his car. Using shoe polish, he wrote "STOP" on the side of his car, to make sure people would find his note, and then started out on foot.

Approximately thirty minutes later, a fish and game inspector did stop. He took the note to the Cedar City sheriff, Otto Pfief, who gathered a party of volunteers and returned to the site. Ninety minutes after he had sighted the strange object, Gerry Irwin was discovered unconscious and taken to the hospital. No trace of an airplane crash was found.

At the hospital, Dr. Broadbent observed that Irwin's temperature and respiration were normal. He seemed merely asleep, but he could not be awakened. Dr. Broadbent diagnosed hysteria. Then, when Irwin did wake up, he felt fine although he was still puzzled by the object he had seen. He was also puzzled by the disappearance of his jacket. He was assured that he was not wearing it when he was found by the search party. Irwin was flown back to Fort Bliss and placed under observation at William Beaumont Army Hospital for four days, after which period he returned to duty. His security clearance, however, was revoked.

Several days later, Irwin fainted while walking in the camp, but he recovered rapidly. Several days afterward, on Sunday, March 15, he fainted again in an El Paso street and was taken to Southwest General Hospital. There his physical condition was found similar to that observed in Cedar City. He woke up at about 2:00 A.M. on Monday and asked: "Where there any survivors?" He was told that the date was not February 28 but March 16. Once more, he was taken to William Beaumont Hospital and placed under observation by psychiatrists. He remained there over one month.

Lorenzen reports that, according to a Captain Valentine, the results of the tests indicated that Irwin was normal. He was discharged from the hospital on April 17.

The next day, following a very powerful urge, he left the fort without leave, caught a bus in El Paso, arrived in Cedar City Sunday afternoon (April 19), walked to the spot where he had seen the object, left the road, and went back through the hills – right to a bush where his jacket lay. There was a pencil in a

buttonhole with a piece of paper wound tightly around it. He took the paper and burned it. Then he seemed to come out of a trance. He had to look for the road. Not understanding why he had come there, he turned himself in and thus met Sheriff Otto Pfief, who gave him the details of the first incident.

The Lorenzens contacted Irwin after he had returned to Fort Bliss and undergone a new psychological examination, as futile as the previous one. His case came to the attention of the Inspector General, who ordered a new investigation. On July 10, Irwin reentered the hospital. On August 1, he failed to report for duty. One month later he was listed as a deserter. He was never seen again.

## New Hampshire Revisited

The Irwin case is reminiscent of another incident that has become one of the standards of modern American folklore: the report by Betty and Barney Hill and their examination under hypnosis by Dr. Benjamin Simon, which has been documented at lenght by John Fuller in his excellent book The Interrupted Journey. The reader must keep in mind the main features of the Irwin and Hill cases in order to follow the discussion that is the object of this chapter.

Report No. 100-1-61, in the files of the 100th Bomb Wing, Strategic Air Command, Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire, was prepared by Major Paul W. Henderson. The only official document concerning the Hill case, it contains a detail of which both Dr. Simon and John Fuller were unaware: the object seen by the Hills had been detected by military radar.

During a casual conversation on 22 Sept 61 between Major Gardiner B. Reynolds, 100th B S DC01 and Captain Robert O. Daughaday, Commander 1917-2 AACS DIT, Pease AFB, N.H., it was revealed that a strange incident occurred at 0214 local on 20 Sept. No importance was attached to the incident at the time.

The visual sighting itself is summarized as follows:

On the night of 19-20 Sept between 20/0001 and 20/0100 Mr. & Mrs. Hill were traveling south on route 3 near Lincoln, N H when they observed, through the windshield of their car, a strange object in the sky. They noticed it because

of its shape and the intensity of its lighting as compared to the stars in the sky. The weather and sky was clear at the time.

In the report itself we read Betty Hill's account of the sighting as reported by Pease Air Force Base officials:

The observers were traveling by car in a southernly direction on Route 3 south of Lincoln, N.H., when they noticed a brightly lighted object ahead of their car at an angle of elevation of approximately 45°. It appeared strange to them because of its shape and the intensity of its lights compared to the stars in the sky. Weather and sky were clear. They continued to observe the object from their moving car for a few minutes then stopped. After stopping the car they used binoculars at times.

They report that the object was traveling north very fast. They report it changed directions rather abruptly and then headed South. Shortly thereafter it stopped and hovered in the air.

There was no sound evident up to this time. Both observers used the binoculars at this point.

While hovering, objects began to appear from the body of the "object" which they describe as looking like wings which made a V shape then extended. The "wings" had red lights on the tips.... The object continued to descend until it appeared to be only a matter of "hundreds of feet" above their car. At this point they decided to get out of that area, and fast.

They report that while the object was above them after it had "swooped down" they heard a series of short loud "buzzes" which they described as sounding like someone had dropped a tuning fork. They report that they could feel these buzzing sounds in their auto. No further visual observations were made of this object. They continued on their trip and when they arrived in the vicinity of Ashland, N.H., about thirty miles from Lincoln, they again heard the "buzzing" sound of the "object", however, they did not see it at this time.

Mrs. Hill reported the flight pattern of the "object" to be erratic, changing directions rapidly, that during its flight it ascended and descended numerous times very rapidly. Its flight was described as jerky and not smooth.

This report is remarkable for what it does not contain. In this respect, it is probably typical of a large class of Air Force records (most of those involving close proximity to a UFO) where either witness reluctance or lack of adequate follow-up eliminated the most significant information. In the present case, the witnesses failed to give the Air Force any information as to the beings they could see aboard the craft during their observation with binoculars. And proper investigation would have disclosed an element of which they were not immediately aware: they could not account for a time gap of two hours between the two periods of buzzing sounds. In fact, they could not recall how they had driven the thirty-five miles between Indian Head and Ashland so casually mentioned in the Air Force report.

Both witnesses had a series of strange nightmares. The dreams led them to see a psychiatrist who used hypnosis to discover the root of the problem, and it was only then found that the origin of the nightmares could be traced to those missing two hours. Under separate hypnosis, Betty and Barney Hill said they had been taken by the strange beings into the UFO.

I have heard the portion of the tapes covering the "abduction" of Betty and Barney Hill. I spent two days in New Hampshire with the witnesses, and with Dr. Simon and John Fuller. The case represents a general pattern that cannot be separated from the total phenomenon.

First, it is interesting to note that, as further details come to the Hills' memories after treatment, the case took on more of the features present in other UFO landings, of which the Hills could not have heard. One such detail is the recollection by Betty Hill that, after their car was stopped and a group of "men" had come toward them, the creatures had opened the door of the vehicle and pointed a small device at her. When I asked her to what usual object she could compare it, she told me, "It could have been a pencil."

It is not necessary to repeat the descriptions given by the Hills of the manner in which they were abducted or of the conditions inside the object. It is enough to say that the statements made under hypnosis by Betty and Barney are in general agreement. And it is also useful to study the detailed accounts of the entities given by the witnesses. Betty states: Most of the men are my height.... None is as tall as Barney, so I would judge them to be 5' to 5'4". Their chests are larger than ours; their noses were larger [longer] than the average size although I have

seen people with noses like theirs – like Jimmy Durante. Their complexions were of gray tone; like a gray paint with a black base; their lips were of bluish tint. Hair and eyes were very dark, possibly black.

In a sense, they looked like mongoloids.... This sort of round face and broad forehead, along with a certain type of coarseness. The surface of their skin seemed to be a bluish gray, but probably whiter than that. Their eyes moved, and they had pupils. Somehow, I had the feeling they were more like cats' eyes.

Barney, on the other hand, says this:

The men had rather odd-shaped heads, with a large cranium, diminishing in size as it got toward the chin. And the eyes continued around to the sides of their heads, so that it appeared that they could see several degrees beyond the lateral extent of our vision. This was startling to me....[The mouth] was much like when you draw one horizontal line with a short perpendicular line on each end. This horizontal line would represent the lips without the muscle that we have. And it would part slightly as they made this mumumumming sound. The texture of the skin, as I remembered it from this quick glance, was grayish, almost metallic looking. I didn't notice any hair – or headgear for that matter. I didn't notice any proboscis, there just seemed to be two slits that represented the nostrils.

There are some obvious contradictions between the two descriptions. Betty speaks of very dark hair; Barney did not notice any. The men described by Barney do not exactly evoke in my mind the picture of Jimmy Durante! On the other hand, the creatures are strikingly reminiscent of the UFO operators of a large number of stories unknown at the time outside a very small group specialists.

Apart from disagreement on the nose and lips, Betty's statement matched the description made by Barney of the shape of the head and the color and appearance of the skin. Another remark by Betty is significant in this respect: "I got the impression that the leader and the examiner were different from the crew members. But this is hard to say, because I really didn't want to look at the men."

Two other elements are outstanding in this case. One of them is the manner of

communication with the strange beings. They communicated among themselves through an audible language, which was definitely not understandable to the witnesses. Yet when they communicated with the Hills, their thoughts came through in English. Betty thinks that they spoke English "with an accent," while Barney feels that the words and the presence of the entity were two separate things: I did not hear an actual voice. But in my mind, I knew what he was saying. It wasn't as if he were talking to me with my eyes open, and he was sitting across the room from me. It was more as if the words were there, a part of me, and he was outside the actual creation of the words themselves.

This remarkable statement, an excellent description of the mechanism that triggered the communication, may well be a clue to the entire episode, and it certainly places the case in the domain of the Theory of Apparitions – as it is treated, for instance, by parapsychology pioneer G. N. M. Tyrrell in his celebrated 1942 Myers Lectures before the British Society for Psychical Research, of which he was president. Thus, it is noteworthy that the apparent absurdity of the sequence of actions constituting the episode should be reducible to the triggering of high-level perception patterns within the witness's brain and not necessarily through any normal physical process. And this characteristic, in its turn, is reminiscent both of neurophysiological experiments and of reports by the most reliable observers of "ghosts," although, of course, ghosts are distinguished from the class of phenomena we are studying here by the absence of material traces – which makes their interpretation a good deal simpler. And while it is possible that a complete theory of ghosts could confine the phenomena to parraments within the human nervous system, the same is not true of UFOs. For this reason, therefore, it is crucial to pursue the investigation of past apparitions in relation to reports such as that of the Hills.

The "experiment" performed on Betty Hill by the entities is also remarkable. It will be recalled that while she was in the craft, Betty was submitted to a simulated medical test. Under hypnosis, she reported that a long needle was inserted into her navel, that she felt pain, and that the pain stopped when the leader made a certain gesture with his hand in front of her eyes. A fifteenth-century French calendar, the Kalendrier des Bergiers, shows the tortures inflicted by demons on the people they have taken: the demons are depicted piercing their victims' abdomens with long needles. In fact, the psychological

invariant in all these stories is unmistakable. The problem, then, is not to identify it, but to relate it in a rational manner to the physical features encountered during the observations – for example, the tracking by military radar operators of the UFO seen by the Hills.

Perhaps we should illustrate the difficulty of this problem by using a case less well known than the Hills' incident, though it is quite as dramatic. It has never appeared in English UFO literature and therefore cannot have influenced American UFO lore. Even in France it is practically unknown. The witness was a woman, and the incident took place on May 20, 1950, at about 4:00 P.M. in the central region of France, near the Loire River. An official investigation by French local police has substantiated the physical traces mentioned in this report, which can be translated thus: I was hurrying back home to prepare dinner. I was happy and content, and I was singing some popular tune. Everything was calm and still, without any breeze or wind; I was alone on the path.

Suddenly, I found myself within a brilliant, blinding light, and I saw two huge black hands appear in front of me. Each one had five fingers, of a black color with a yellowish tinge, somewhat like copper. The fingers were roughly formed, slightly vibrating, or quivering.

These hands did not come from behind me, but from above, as if they had been hanging over my head awaiting the proper time to catch me. The black hands did not immediately apply themselves to my head. I probably took two or three steps before they touched me. The hands had no visible arms! The two black hands were applied to my face with violence and squeezed my head, as a bird of prey rushes on its unfortunate, helpless victim. They pulled my head back against a very hard chest – one that seemed to be made of iron; I felt the cold through my hair and behind my neck, but no contact with clothes. The hands were squeezing my head like a formidable vice, not abruptly, but gradually. They were very cold, and their touch made me think that they were not made of flesh. The big fingers were placed on my eyes, and I could not see anymore, on my nose so that I could not breathe, and also my mouth, to prevent me from crying out.

Unable to defend herself, the abducted woman was at the mercy of the entity: When I was surrounded by the strong, blinding light, I had the feeling I had

been paralyzed, and when the hands touched me, I had the very distinct impression of a strong electric discharge, as if I had been shaken by a lightning bolt. My whole body was annihilated, helpless, without reflexes.

She heard her aggressor laugh, and she reported that she was hurt by a blow in the back, as if from a metallic object. She was pulled backwards through the bushes.

My aggressor pulled me through the bushes until we reached a small pasture, and suddenly he stopped! Why? His hands had gradually slipped down my face, and I tried to call for help but I had no voice left but a tiny, shrill cry. After a while I was able to sit among the brambles. I had a very hard time breathing. My bag was still in my hand, with the money it contained. At last I was able to get up in spite of my weakness, and then I heard some noise to my left inside the bushes. I thought I was going to see my aggressors and recognize their faces, but I saw nothing! Only the branches moved, waving in the air; I saw and heard the brambles scratshing the empty space, and the grass being pressed as if under the steps of some invisible being. I was terrified. Softly, I took to the path again, walking with difficulty.

My legs were lacerated by the brambles and bleeding; I felt a strange sensation of nervous exhaustion, indefinable, as if I had been electrified by a strong current. In my mouth was a sickening, metallic, bitter taste; my muscles did not obey me. Over my shoulders I felt something like a bar, and in my back a painful heat, as if I had been exposed to flames or to a burning ray. At times I still felt as if I was being brushed by an invisible brush. I must have walked like that for five or six minutes. At the end of the path there was a turn, and from there I could see houses, and then the pain decreased a little bit.

Another remarkable observation was yet to come:

Everything had lasted a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, and it seemed that I had lived in an unreal world. Abruptly I heard a great noise, like a violent wind during a storm, a sudden displacement of warm air or a violent whirlwind. I saw the trees bending as if under a sudden storm, and I was nearly thrown down. Almost simultaneously, there was a strong, blinding white light. I had the feeling something flew through the air very fast, but I saw nothing. Soon everything became calm again. I felt discomfort and nausea. I

reached the house of the lock-keeper – and when I opened the door they came toward me and asked me what had happened, because they too had seen a light from their house. The lock-keeper's wife asked me what was wrong. When I was able to speak at last, they told me all the fingers were still deeply marked in the flesh of my face, making large red bars. They applied perocide to the scratches on my legs, and an ointment, and bathed me face with cold water.

My hands were badly hurt.

After a long lapse of time I started again toward the town to buy a few things, without saying anything to anyone, and I came back home laboriously, by another path.

The previous evening, the witness in this case had observed a "kind of shooting star," which stopped abruptly, then appeared to go up and stay among the other stars for a while, then to grow bigger and take on a kind of swimming motion, its light alternately on and off. Suddenly it left, on a curved trajectory, and reached the horizon at very high speed. She had dismissed the incident from her mind at the time. The official investigation got nowhere and was dropped. The case is still carried as an unsolved abduction attempt.

What can we say about such reports? They are neither more nor less believable than other UFO sightings; they are in line with some of the most dramatic stories of older days, which inspired the fairy tales; they are also in line with the visions of the 1897 airship and the incidents that followed it.

I now have several other reliable cases in my files where the beings – and in some cases, the UFO itself – were invisible.

The records of ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) contain another abduction case that occurred on August 21, 1915. In that incident, which I have not been able to confirm, an entire regiment was posted as "missing."

Taken by the Wind

We have now examined several claims of abductions and attempts at kidnappings by the alleged occupants of flying saucers. These episode are an

integral part of the total UFO problem and cannot be solved separately. Historical evidence gathered by Evans-Wentz points in the same direction.

This sort of belief in fairies being able to take people was very common and exists yet in a good many parts of West Ireland.

The Good People are often seen there [pointing to Knoch Magh] in great crowds playing hurley and ball. And one often sees among them the young men and women and children who have been taken.

Not only are people taken away, but – as in flying saucer stories – they may be picked up and set down again. A man named John Campbell told Evans-Wentz: A man whom I have seen, Roderick Mac Neil, was lifted by the hosts and left three miles from where he was taken up. The hosts went at about midnight.

Reverend Kirk gives a few stories of similar extraordinary kidnappings, but the most fantastic legend of all is that attached to Kirk himself. The good reverend is commonly believed to have been taken by strange beings:

Mrs. J. MacGregor who keeps the key to the old churchyard where there is a tomb to Kirk, though many say there is nothing in it but a coffin filled with stones, told me Kirk was taken into the Fairy Knoll, which she pointed to just across a little valley in front of us, and is there yet, for the hill is full of caverns and in them the "good people" have their homes. And she added that Kirk appeared to a relative of his after he was taken.

Evans-Wentz, who reports this interesting story, made further inquiries regarding the circumstances of Kirk's death. He went to see the successor to Kirk in Aberfoyle, Reverend Taylor, who clarified the story:

At the time of his disappearance people said he was taken because the fairies were displeased with him for disclosing their secrets in so public manner as he did. At all events, it seems likely that Kirk was taken ill very suddenly with something like apoplexy while on the Fairy Knoll, and died there. I have searched the presbyter books and find no record of how Kirk's death really took place, but of course there is not the least doubt of his body being in the grave.

Kirk believed in the ability of the Good People to perform abductions, and this idea was so widespread that it has come down to us through a variety of channels. This fact enables us to examine in detail four aspects of fairy lore that directly relate to our study: (1) the conditions and purpose of the abductions; (2) the cases of release from Magonia and the forms taken by the elves' gratitude when the abducted human being had performed some valuable service during his stay; (3) the belief in the kidnapping activities of the fairy people; and (4) what I shall call the relativistic aspects of the trip to Magonia.

Hartland reports that a Swedish book published in 1775 contains a legal statement, solemnly sworn on April 12, 1671, by the husband of a midwife who was taken to fairyland to assist a troll's wife in giving birth to a child. The author of the statement seems to have been a clergyman.

On the authority of this declaration we are called on to believe that the event recorded actually happened in the year 1660. Peter Rahm alleges that he and his wife were at their farm one evening late when there came a little man, swart of face and clad in grey, who begged the declarant's wife to come and help his wife then in labour. The declarant, seeing that they had to do with a Troll, prayed over his wife, blessed her, and bade her in God's name go with the stranger. She seemed to be borne along by the wind.

It is reported that she came home "in the same manner," having refused any food offered to her while in the troll's company.

In another tale, the midwife's husband accompanies her through the forest. They are guided by the "earthman" – the gnome who has requested their help. They go through a moss door, then a wooden door, and later through a door of shining metal. A stairway leads them inside the earth, to a magnificent chamber where the "earthwife" is resting. Kirk reports that in a case whose principals he personally knew the abducted woman found the home of the Little People filled with light, although she could not see any lamp or fire.

Reverend Kirk also says that later, "in the company of another clergyman," he visited a woman, then forty years old, and asked her questions concerning her knowledge of the fairies. It was rumored that for a number of years she had taken almost no nourishment, and that she often stayed late in the fields looking after her sheep, that she met there and talked with people she did not know, and

that one night she had fallen asleep on a hill and had been carried away into another place before sunrise. This woman, says Kirk, was always melancholy and silent.

Magonia, as it appears in such tales, is sometimes a remote country, an invisible island, some faraway place one can reach only by a long journey. Indeed, in some tales, it is a celestial country, as in the Indian story quoted earlier. This parallels the belief in the extraterrestrial origin of UFOs so popular today. But a second – and equally widespread – theory, is that Magonia constitutes a sort of parallel universe, which coexists with our own. It is made visible and tangible only to selected people, and the doors that lead through it are tangential points, known only to the elves and a few of their initiates.

Hartland gives tales that illustrate the latter theory, such as the following: In Nithsdale a fairy rewards the kindness of a young mother, to whom she had committed her baby to suckle, by taking her on a visit to Fairyland. A door opened in a green hillside, disclosing a porch which the nurse and her conductor entered. There the lady dropped three drops of a precious dew on the nurse's left eyelid, and they were admitted to a beautiful land watered with meandering rivulets and yellow with corn, where the trees were laden with fruits which dropped honey. The nurse was here presented with magical gifts, and when a green dew had baptized her right eye she was enabled to behold further wonders. On returning the fairy passed her hand over the woman's eye and restored its natural powers.

This tale brings us to our second point, that of the gratitude shown by the elves in return for services performed by humans, and the form such gratitude takes. The gratitude itself is evidenced by many stories of elvish gifts in Scandinavian and Northern European tales, such as this one: A German midwife, who was summoned by a Waterman, or Nix, to aid a woman in labor, was told by the latter: "I am a Christian woman as well as you; and I was carried off by a Waterman, who changed me. When my husband comes in now and offers you money, take no more from him than you usually get, or else he will twist your neck. Take good care!"

In another story, the midwife is asked how much she wants. She answers she will not take more from them than from other people, and the elf replies:

"That's lucky for thee. Hadst thou demanded more, it would have gone ill with thee!" In spite of that, she received her apron full of gold.

In a Pomeranian story, the midwife similarly replies to the same question, and the manikin says, "Now then, lift up thy apron!" and fills it with rubbish that lay in the corner of the room. He then takes his lantern and politely escorts her home. But when she shakes out her apron, pure gold falls on the floor.

Elvish gifts have a magical character that could be illustrated with tales from practically any country. Chinese folklore, in particular, gives numerous examples of this. In one tale, the dwarf fills the woman's apron with something she must not look at before she reaches her house. Naturally she takes a look as soon as the dwarf has vanished, and sees that she is carrying black coals. Angered, she throws them away, retaining two as evidence of the dwarf's bad treatment. She arrives home and discovers the black coals have turned into precious stones. But when she goes back to find the other coals, they are all gone.

There are numerous stories of humans who have gone to Magonia of their own will, either taking a message or bringing one back, or performing some service for the supernatural beings who live there. But – and this is my third point – we also have numerous accounts of abductions by the fairies. As in the cases of UFO abductions published by Budd Hopkins in his book Intruders, they take men and women, especially pregnant women or young mothers, and they also steal young children. Sometimes, they are said to substitute a false child for the real one, leaving in place of the real child a broom with rugs wrapped around it or one of their children, a changeling: By the belief in changelings I mean a belief that fairies and other imaginary beings are on the watch for young children or... sometimes even for adults, that they may, if they can find them unguarded, seize and carry them off, leaving in their place one of them.

This belief is not confined to Europe. It is found in regions as remote from Europe as China and the American Pacific coast. Once the parents have recognized their child has been taken, what should they do? Hartland says that a method in favour in the North of Scotland is to take the suspected elf to some known haunt of its race, generally, we are told, some spot where peculiar coughing sounds are heard, or to some barrow, or stone circle, and lay it down. An offering of bread, butter, milk, cheese, eggs and flesh or fowl must

accompany the child.

But sometimes more radical methods have been used, and we can only pity any poor children who may have been ill-treated because their superstitious parents thought they looked like elves! As late as May 17, 1884, it was reported in the London Daily Telegraph, two women were arrested at Clonmel and charged with cruelty toward a child three years old. They thought he was a changeling and, by ill-treating him, hoped to obtain the real child from the elves! And there is no question that in medieval times the same superstition has led to the death of children who had congenital defects.

Sometimes the same treatment applies to adults who have been "changed," and Hartland gives a funny example of such a case:

A tale from Badenoch represents the man as discovering the fraud from finding his wife, a woman of unruffled temper, suddenly turned a shrew. So he piles up a great fire and threatens to throw the occupant of the bed upon it unless she tells him what has become of his wife. She then confesses that the latter has been carried off, and she has been appointed successor. But by his determination he happily succeeds in recapturing his own at a certain fairy knoll near Inverness.

Of course, the UFO myth has not yet reached such proportions, but we are perhaps not quite far from it. American television series such as "The Twilight Zone" have capitalized on this aspect in episodes that assume that the human race has been infiltrated by extraterrestrials who differ from humans in small details only. This is not a new idea, as the belief in changelings shows. What was the purpose of such abductions? The idea advanced by students of folk tales is again very close to a current theory about UFOs: that the purpose of such contact is a genetic one. According to Hartland:

The motive assigned to fairies in northern stories is that of preserving and improving their race, on the one hand by carrying off human children to be brought up among the elves and to become united with them, and on the other hand by obtaining the milk and fostering care of human mothers for their own offspring.

Similarly, Budd Hopkins, the researcher and artist who has become one of the

most visible "experts" on the abduction reports, wrote in 1987: Do the UFO occupants want to lessen the distance between our race and theirs in order to land, eventually, and join us on our planet?.... Or do these aliens merely wish to enrich their own stock and then depart as mysteriously as they arrived?

Such is not always the purpose of abduction, however, and people are often returned by the elves after nothing more than a dance or a game. But a strange phenomenon often takes place: the people who have spent a day in Elfland come back to this world one year, or more, older!

This is our fourth point, and quite a remarkable one. Time does not pass there as it does here. And we have in such stories the first idea of the relativity of time. How did this idea come to the storytellers ages ago? What inspired them? No one can answer such questions. But it is a fact that the nonsymmetry of the time element between Magonia and our world is present in the tales from all countries.

Discussing this supernatural lapse of time, Hartland relates the true story of Rhys and Llewellyn, recorded about 1825 in the Vale of Neath, Wales. Rhys and Llewellyn were servants to a farmer. As they went home one night, Rhys told his friend to stop and listen to the music. Llewellyn heard no music. But Rhys had to dance to the tune he had heard a hundred times. He begged Llewellyn to go ahead with the horses, saying that he would soon overtake him, but Llewellyn arrived home alone.

The next day, he was suspected of murdering Rhys and was jailed. But a farmer "who was skilled in fairy matters" guessed the truth. Several men gathered – among them the narrator of the story – and took Llewellyn to the spot where he said his companion had vanished. Suddenly, "Hush!" cried Llewellyn. "I hear music, I hear sweet harps."

All listened but could hear nothing. Llewellyn's foot was on the outer edge of the fairy ring. He told the narrator to place his foot on his, and then he too heard the sounds of many harps and saw a number of Little People dancing in a circle twenty feet or so in diameter. After him, each of the party did the same and observed the same thing. Among the dancing Little Folk was Rhys.

Llewellyn caught him by his frock as he passed close to them and pulled him

out of the circle. At once Rhys asked, "Where are the horses?" and asked them to let him finish the dance, which had not lasted more than five minutes. And he could never be persuaded of the time that had elapsed.

He became melancholy, fell ill, and soon after died.

Such stories can be found in Keightley's The Fairy Mythology and other books. The story of Rhys and Llewellyn is remarkable because it dates from the nineteenth century, thus providing continuity between fairy and UFO lore. In tales of this type, several modes of recovery of the persons taken are offered. One of them consists in touching the abducted man with a piece of iron, and the objection of supernatural beings to this metal is one of the themes of fairy lore.

Near Bridgend, Wales is a place where it is reported that a woman who had been taken by the fairies came back ten years later and thought she had not been away more than ten days. Hartland gives another charming story on the same theme, concerning a boy named Gitto Bach, or Little Griffith, a farmer's son who disappeared:

During two whole years nothing was heard of him; but at lenght one morning when his mother, who had long and bitterly mourned for him as dead, opened the door, whom should she sitting on the threshold but Gitto with a bundle under his arm. He was dressed and looked exactly as when she last saw him, for he had not grown a bit. " Where have you been all this time?" asked his mother. "Why, it was only yesterday I went away," he replied; and opening the bundle he showed her a dress the "little children" as he called them, had given him for dancing with them. The dress was of white paper without seam. With maternal caution she put it into the fire.

The best-known stories where time relativity is the main theme are of course of the "Rip van Winkle" type, patterned after numerous folk tales that allegedly concern actual events. Strangely enough, we again find the identical theme in ages-old Chinese folklore. Witness the story of Wang Chih, one of the holy men of the Taoists.

One day, as Wang Chih wandered through the mountains of Ku Chow gathering firewood, he saw a grotto where some old men were playing chess. He came in to watch their game and laid down his ax. One of the old men gave him

something like a date-stone and instructed him to place it in his mouth. "No sooner had he done so than hunger and thirst passed away." Some time later, one of the aged players told him, "It is long since you came here; you should go home now." But as he turned to pick up his ax, Wang Chih found that he handle had turned into dust. He reached the valley, but found not hours or days but centuries had passed, and nothing remained of the world as he had known it.

A similar tradition exists in Denmark. In a tale which is typical of the pattern, a bride thoughtlessly walked through the fields during the festivities of her wedding day and passed a mound "where the elves were making merry." (Again, we have here a description of the Little People close to the magical object sometimes described as a large, flat, round table, sometimes as a hillock. A disk or a large cone resting on the ground would fit that description. In describing the fairy knoll, Hartland writes: "The hillock was standing, as is usual on such occasions, on red pillars!" ) The "wee folk" offered the bride a cup of wine, and she joined in a dance with them. Then she hastened back home, where she could not find her family. Everything had changed in the village.

Finally, on hearing her cries, a very old woman exclaimed: "Was it you, then, who disappeared at my grandfather's brother's wedding, a hundred years ago?" At these words, the poor girl fell down and expired.

It is fascinating indeed to find such tales, which antedate Einstein's and Langevin's relativistic traveler by centuries.

The supernatural lapse of time in Magonia is often allied to the theme of love between the abducted human and one of the beings. Such is the pattern of the story of Ossian, or Oisin.

Once, when he was young man, Oisin fell asleep under a tree. He woke up suddenly and found a richly dressed lady "of more than mortal beauty" looking at him. She was the queen of the legendary land of Tir na n'Og, and she invited him to share her palace. Oisin and the queen were in love and happy, but the hero was warned not to go into the palace gardens or to stand on a certain flat stone. Naturally, he transgressed the order, and, when he stood upon the stone, he beheld his native land, suffering from oppression and violence. He went to the queen and told her he must return. "How long do you think you have been

with me?" she asked. "Thrice seven days," said he.

"Thrice seven years," was the answer. But he still wanted to go back. She then gave him a black horse from whose back he must not alight during his trip in the other world, for fear of seeing the power of time suddenly fall on him. But he forgot the warning when an incident induced him to dismount, and at once he became a feeble, blind, and helpless old man.

It is not necessary to spend time here, to dwell in detail, on the tales of the island of Avalon, Morgan the Fay, the legend of Ogier the Dane, and the magical travels of King Arthur. All these traditions insist on the peculiar nature of time in the "other world." Nor is this limited to European history, as Hartland again points out:

Many races having traditions of a Culture God – that is, of a superior being who has taught them agriculture and the arts of life, and led them to victory over their enemies – add that he has gone away from them for awhile, and that he will some day come back again.

Quetzalcoatl and Viracocha, the culture gods of Mexico and Peru, are familiar instances of this.

Similary, Vishnu has yet a tenth incarnation to accomplish the final destruction of this world's wicked. At the end of the present age, according to Hindu tradition, he will be revealed in the sky, seated on a white horse and holding a blazing sword.

Such great traditions are common knowledge, like the abductions of Enoch, Ezekiel, Elijah, and others in the Bible. What is not commonly known is that such legends have been built on the popular belief in numerous actual stories of the less glorious, more ordinary and personal, type we have reviewed here. For instance, while all books about Mexico mention Quetzalcoatl, they usually ignore the local beliefs in little black beings, the ikals, whose pranks we have already mentioned.

While their relationship with modern Latin American UFO lore is clear, they also provide an obvious parallel to the fairy-faith.

In his study of the tales of Tenejapa, anthropologist Brian Stross reports of the ikals: They are believed to be beings from another world, and some have been seen flying with some kind of rocket-like thing attached to the back. With this rocket they are said occasionally to have carried off people.

Similarly, Gordon Creighton reports:

The ikal of the Tzotzils flies through the air. Sometimes he steals women, and the women so taken are remarkably prolific, and may bear a child once a week, or once a month, or even daily. The offspring are black, and they learn the art of flying inside their father's cave.

Brian Stross's Indian informants reported that a flurry of ikals was sighted "about twenty years ago" – which would take us back to 1947, the year of the sighting by pilot Kenneth Arnold over Mt. Rainier, in Washington, which gave birth to the term flying saucer. It was a very significant period in UFO history.

Beyond Reason

In the past twenty years, UFO reports have been studied by serious persons who have tried to place them within the framework of space science, modern physics, psychology, or the history of superstition.

Superficially, the most appealing of the theories proposed is the extraterrestrial theory which would regard the UFOs as probes from another planet. Yet it falls short of explaining the phenomena in their historical development. Present-day saucers cannot be evaluated without reference to the 1897 airship or to earlier sighting of similar objects. Then, too, the theory of simple visitation must be compared with the assumption that the visitors know far more physics than we do – so much more, in fact, that an interpretation in terms of physical concepts known to us is bound to end in failure and contradiction. A second major flaw in all the theories proposed so far is found in the description of the entities and their behavior. As we will see below, any theory can account for some of these reports, but only at the expense of arbitrary rejection of a much larger group.

To put it bluntly, the UFO phenomenon does not give evidence of being extraterrestrial at all.

Instead it appears to be inter-dimensional and to manipulate physical realities outside of our own spacetime continuum.

October 12, 1963. Between Monte Maiz and Isla Verde, in Argentina, Eugenio Douglas drove his truck loaded with coal through the hard rain. Dawn was coming. Suddenly, Douglas saw a bright spot on the road ahead, like the headlights of an approaching vehicle, except that it was a single, blinding light. To avoid a collision, Douglas slowed down. The light became so intense he had to lower his head and move to the side. He stopped the truck and got out. The light had disappeared.

Through the rain, Eugenio Douglas could now see a circular metallic craft, about thirty-five feet high. An opening became visible, making a second area of light, less intense, and three figures appeared. They looked like men, but they were wearing strange headdresses with things like antennae attached. They were over twelve feet tall. There was nothing repulsive about the entities, said Douglas, but he was terribly scared.

As soon as he was seen by the figures, a ray of red light flashed to the spot where he stood and burned him. Grabbing a revolver, he fired at the three entities and ran off toward Monte Maiz. But the burning red light followed him as far as the village, where it interfered with the street lights, turning them violet and green. Douglas could smell a pungent gas. The beauty and dramatic character of that scene is impressive. In a screen illustration of the UFO saga this is probably the sighting that would best carry its total meaning.

Douglas ran to the nearest house and shouted for help. Ribas, the owner, had died the previous night, but his family, gathered around the body, reported that at the same time they heard Douglas's call the candles in the room and the electric lights in the house turned green, and the same strange smell was noticed. They rushed to open the door: there was Douglas in the pouring rain, his overcoat over his head and a gun in his hand. The street lights had changed color. It must have been one of the most visually fantastic scenes in the rich archives of ufology.

Eugenio Douglas was taken to the police station, where the burns on his face and hands were clearly seen. The police, it turned out, had recieved a number of calls about the lights' color change, but they had attributed the change to

irregularities in the local power plant – which, however, would hardly account for the change in the candle lights! Douglas was examined by a doctor, who stated that the burns had been caused by a radiation similar to ultraviolet (according to Douglas, he had felt a burn when exposed to a red beam). When villagers went to the site where the truck was still parked, they found large footprints, nearly twenty inches long, but they were shortly afterward washed away by rain.

In late August 1963 near the town of Sagrada Familia, Brazil, three boys, Fernando Eustagio, eleven, his brother Ronaldo, nine, and a neighbor named Marcos, went into the Eustagio garden and started to draw water from the well. Suddenly they became aware of a hovering sphere above the trees. They could even see four or five rows of people inside the sphere. An opening under the shpere became visible, and two light rays shot downward. A slender, ten-foot-tall being came down, as if gliding on the two beams of light. He alighted in the garden and walked for twenty feet or so in an odd fashion: his back seemed stiff, his legs were open, and his arms outstretched. He swung his body from left to right as if trying to find his balance and then sat down an a rock.

The three boys observed that the giant wore a transparent helmet and had in the middle of his forehead what they described as a dark eye. He wore tall boots, each of which was equipped with a strange triangular spike, which made a peculiar impression in the soft ground and could be seen for several days afterward. His garment was shiny and had inflated as soon as the entity had touched the ground. The trousers seemed to be fastened tightly to the boots. He had a peculiar square pack on his chest, which emitted flashes of light intermittently.

Inside the sphere, still hanging motionless above the garden, the three boys could see occupants behind control panels "turning knobs and flicking switches." When the giant in the garden made a motion as if to grab one of the boys, Fernando picked up a stone – only to find himself unable to do anything with it as the spaceman looked straight into his eyes. The giant then returned to the sphere, still using the light beams as an "elevator" but holding his arms close to his body this time. The boys were no longer afraid, although they could not account for this change in their feeling. As the sphere left, they were sure the giant spaceman had not come to hurt them, and somehow, in the same

irrational fashion, they knew he would come back again.

In Brazil, six years earlier, an incident gained the place in UFO literature it certainly deserves, thanks to an excellent investigation by the late Professor Olavo Fontes of the National School of Medicine in Rio de Janeiro. He interviewed and examined the witness, Antonio Villas-Boas, of Sao Francisco de Sales, Minas Gerais.

On the night of October 5, 1957, Antonio and his brother went to bed about 11:00 P.M. The night was hot, and as he opened the window Antonio saw a silvery light in the corral similar to the spot made by a powerful searchlight. Later that night, the two brothers observed the light was still there.

Then it moved toward the house, sweeping the roof before going away.

About 10:00 P.M. on October 14, Antonio was plowing with his tractor when he saw a blinding white light at the northern end of the field. Every time he tried to approach it, the light moved away.

This happened about twenty times, though the light always appeared to wait for him. His second brother was watching the scene as Antonio finally gave up. The light simply vanished.

The next evening, Antonio was alone at the same spot. The night was cold, clear, and starry. At 1:00 A.M. he saw something like a red star, which grew larger and became an egg-like, bright object that hovered above his tractor, then landed softly. Antonio tried to drive away, but the engine of the tractor died. He jumped down and took two steps, but someone caught his arm. After a short struggle, four men carried him inside the craft. The beings communicated among themselves in slowly emitted growls, unlike any sound the witness could reproduce, although they were "neither high-pitched nor too low." In spite of his resistance, the creatures stripped him, washed his body with something like a wet sponge, and took him into another room through a strangely lettered door.

It is not my purpose here to record all the details of the experience reported by Villas-Boas; they have been adequately documented by Fontes and Creighton and later by the Lorenzens, who provided a complete reprint of the testimony,

along with the professional opinion of Dr. Fontes after his medical examination of the witness, in their book Flying Saucer Occupants.

Antonio remained alone in the room for what seemed a very long time. When he heard a noise at the door, he turned and recieved a "terrible shock": the door was open, and a woman as naked as he was came in. Her hair was blonde, with a part in the center. She had blue eyes, rather longer than round, slanted outward. Her nose was straight, her cheekbones prominent. Her face looked very wide, "wider than that of an Indio native." It ended in a pointed chin. Her lips were very thin, nearly invisible. Her ears were small but ordinary. She was much shorter than he was, her head only reaching his shoulder. She quickly made clear to him what the purpose of her visit was. Soon after the sexual episode, a man came in and beckoned to the woman, who, pointing to her belly, smiled, pointed at the sky, and followed the man out.

The men came back with Antonio's clothes, then took him to a room where the other crew members were sitting, growling among themselves. The witness, who felt sure no harm would come to him now, carefully observed his surroundings. Among other things – all his remarks here are of interest – he noticed a box with a glass top that had the appearance of an alarm clock. The "clock" had one hand and several marks that would correspond to the three, six, nine, and twelve of an ordinary clock. However, although time passed, the hand did not move, and Antonio concluded that it was no clock.

The symbolism in this remark by Villas-Boas is clear. We are reminded of the tales quoted above, of the country where time does not pass, and of that great poet who had in his room a huge white clock without hands, bearing the words "It is later than you think." Indeed, it is the poetic quality of such details in many UFO sightings that catches the attention – in spite of the irrational, or obviously absurd, character of the tale – and makes them so similar to a dream. Antonio must have though so, because he reflected that he must bring some evidence back and tried to steal the "clock." At once, one of the men shoved him to the side angrily. This attempt to secure evidence is a constant feature of fairy tales, and we are also reminded of the efforts by Betty Hill to convince her captors to let her take a peculiar "book" she saw inside their craft. As in the Villas-Boas incident, the men denied her the opportunity to convince the

world that the experience had been real. (She also observed a strange map that we will discuss in a later chapter.)

At last, one of the men motioned Antonio to follow him to a circular platform. He was then given a detailed tour of the machine, taken to a metal ladder, and signaled to go down. Antonio watched all the details of the preparation for takeoff and observed the craft as it rose and flew away in a matter of seconds. He noticed that the time was 5:30 A.M. He had spent over four hours inside the strange machine.

It must be noted that the witness volunteered information about the sighting in general terms when a notice appeared in a newspaper calling for UFO reports. He was extremely reluctant to discuss the more personal aspects of his experience and related them only when questioned with insistence by Fontes. Like Maurice Masse, Villas-Boas suffered from excessive sleepiness for about a month after the incident.

The Sexual Episodes

When folklore becomes degraded to a minor literary form, as the fairy-faith was degraded to the fairy tales we know today, it natualy loses much of its content: precisely those "adult" details that cannot be allowed to remain in children's books. The direct result of the censorship of spicy details in these marvelous stories is that they become mere occasions for amazement. The Villas-Boas case is hardly appropriate for nursery-school reading, but to eliminate the woman from the story would turn it into a tale without deep symbolic or psychological value. The sexual context is precisely what gives such accounts their significance and their impact. The sexual (and, in some cases mentioned by Budd Hopkins, the sadomasochistic) component of the abduction stories provides an emotional "encoding" that makes them unforgettable.

Without the sexual context – without the stories of changelings, human midwives, intermarriage with the Gentry, of which we never hear in modern fairy tales – it is doubtful that the tradition about fairies would have survived through the ages. Nor is that true only of fairies: the most remarkable cases of sexual contact with nonhumans are not found in spicy saucer books, nor in fairy legends; they rest, safely stored away, in the archives of the Catholic Church.

To find them, one must first learn Latin and gain entrance into the few libraries where these unique records are preserved. But the accounts one finds there make the Villas-Boas case and contemporary UFO books pale by comparison, as I believe the reader will agree before the end of this chapter.

Let us first establish clearly that the belief in the possibility of intermarriage between human and nonhuman races is a corollary to the apparitions in all historical contexts.

This is so obvious in biblical stories that I hardly need elaborate. The sex of the angels is the clearest of all theological questions. In Anatole France's novel Revolt of the Angels it is Arcade, one of the celestial beings, who says to a young Frenchman named Maurice who accuses him of stealing his girlfriend:

There's nothing like having sound references. In order to assure yourself that I am not deceiving you, Maurice, on this subject of the amorous embraces of angels and women, look up Justin, Apologies I and II; Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, Book I, Chapter III; Athenagoras, Concerning the Resurrection; Lactantius, Book II, Chapter XV; Tertullian, On the Veil of the Virgins; Marcus of Ephesus in Psellus; Eusebius, Praepartio Evangelica, Book V, Chapter IV; Saint Ambrose, in his book on Noah and the Ark, Chapter V; Saint Augustine in his City of God, Book XV, Chapter XXIII; Father Meldonat, the Jesuit, Treatise on Demons, page 248.

Thus spoke Arcade, his guardian angel, to poor Maurice, as he tried to apologize for having stolen his mistress, pretty Madam Gilberte. And he added shamelessly, It was bound to be so; all the other angels in revolt would have done as I did with Gilberte.

"Women, saith the Apostle, should pray with their heads covered, because of the angels."

This is clear enough. But fairies and elves? Are they subject to such carnal desires? Consider the following facts.

In the preface of the Saga of Hrolf, Torfeus, a seventeenth-century Danish historian, records statements made about the elves by Einard Gusmond, the Icelandic scholar: I am convinced they really do exist, and they are creatures

of God; that they get married like we do, and have children of either sex: we have proof of this in what we know of the love of some of their women with simple mortals.

William Grant Stewart, in The Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlanders of Scotland, devotes the second part of his discussion to the same problem. In a chapter entitled "Of the Passions and Propensities of the Fairies," he has this to say on sexual intercourse with them: The fairies are remarkable for the amorousness of their dispositions, and are not very backward in forming attachments and connections with the people that cannot with propriety be called their own species.

This is a beautiful example of convoluted phraseology. Steward is less obviously embarrassed when he reports that such events no longer seem to take place between people and fairies: We owe it, in justice to both the human and the fairy communities of the present day, to say, that such intercourse as that described to have taken place betwixt them is now extremely rare: with the single exception of a good old shoemaker, now or lately living in the village of Tomantoul, who confesses having had some dalliances with a "lanan-shi" in his younger days, we do not know personally any one who has carried matters this lenght.

If Stewart came back today, he would have to revise this statement after reading UFO material.

Reverend Kirk stated the case more clearly when he said: "In our Scotland there are numerous and beautiful creatures of that aerial order, who frequently assign meetings to lascivious young men as succubi, or as joyous mistresses and prostitutes, who are called Leannain Sith or familiar spirits. "I hardly need to remind the reader of the importance of such "familiar spirits" in medieval occultism, particularly in Rosicrucian theories. Nor do I need to mention the number of accused witches who were condemned to death on the evidence that they had such familiar spirits. Like the modern abductees examined by Budd Hopkins, the women accused of witchcraft usually had a strange mark or scar somewhere on their body.

There is no gap between the fairy-faith and ufology regarding the sexual question. This is apparent from the study made by Evans-Wentz, who records

the following story: My grandmother Catherine MacInnis used to tell about a man named Laughlin, whom she knew, being in love with a fairy-woman. The fairy-woman made it a point to see Laughlin every night, and he being worn out with her began to fear her. Things got so bad at last that he decided to go to America to escape the fairy-woman. As soon as the plan was fixed and he was about to emigrate, women who were milking at sunset out in the meadows heard very audibly the fairy-woman singing this song:

What will the brown-haired woman do

When Lachie is on the billows?

Lachie emigrated to Cape Breton, landing at Pictu, Nova Scotia; and in his first letter home to his friends he stated that the same fairy-woman was haunting him there in America.

The comments by Evans-Wentz on this case are important: To discover a tale so rare and curious as this... is certainly of all our evidence highly interesting. And aside from its high literary value, it proves conclusively that the fairy-women who entice mortals to their love in modern times are much the same, if not the same, as the succubi of middle-age mystics.

This allows us to return to the religious records mentioned above, which offer some of the most remarkable cases of apparition I have ever come across. It is difficult to believe that stories exist that surpass, for their amazing contents or shocking features, some of the reports we have already studied, such as the Hills' case or the Villas-Boas report. But, remarkable as they are, these latter two accounts refer only to one aspect of the total phenomenon; they can be interpreted only after being placed within the continuum of hundreds of lesser-known cases, which provide the necessary background.

A book by Isidore Liseux, attributed by him to a theologian named Sinistrari, shows that church scholars were as puzzled by reports of incubi and succubi as most modern students of UFO lore are by the Villas-Boas case. Observing that the fundamental texts of the church gave no clear opinion on such cases, the author wondered how they should be judged by religious law. There are numerous cases in the records of the church (especially in witch trials) in which intercourse with incubi is found. From the church's point of view, this

raises several problems. First, how is such intercourse physically possible? Second, how does demoniality differ from bestiality? Third, what sin is committed by those who engage in such intercourse? Fourth, what should their punishment be?

The earliest author who uses the word demonialitas is J. Caramuel, in his Theologia Fundamentalis. Before him, no one made a distinction between demoniality and bestiality. All the moralists, following St. Thomas Aquinas, understood by bestiality "any kind of carnal intercourse with an object of a different species." Thus Cajetan in his commentary on St. Thomas places intercourse with the demon in the class of bestiality, and so does Sylvester when he defines Luxuria, and Bonacina in De Matrimonio.

In this respect, Villas-Boas's remark that lying with the woman gave him the impression he was lying with an animal, because of her "growls," is striking.

On this fine point of theology Sinistrari concludes that St. Thomas never meant intercourse with demons to fall within his definition of bestiality. By different species, Sinistrari says, the saint can only mean species of living beings, and this hardly applies to the devil. Similarly, if a man copulates with a corpse, this is not bestiality, especially according to the Thomist doctrine that denies a corpse the nature of the human body. The same would be true for a man who copulates with the corpse of an animal. It is quite fascinating to follow Sinistrari's thoughts in an area that is directly relevant to UFO reports: Villas-Boas would certainly have had a hard time before the Inquisitors if he had lived in an earlier age. Indeed, a man named Benoît de Berne, who confessed at age seventy-five that he had had intercourse for forty years with a succuba named Mermeline, was condemned and burned alive.

The act of love, writes Sinistrari, has for its object human generation. Unnatural semination, that is, intercourse that cannot be followed by generation, constitutes a sin against nature. But it is the subject of that semination that distinguishes the various sins under that type. If demoniality and bestiality were in the same category, a man who had copulated with a demon could simply tell his confessor: "I have committed the sin of bestiality." And yet he obviously has not committed that sin.

Considerable problems arose when one had to identify the physical process of

intercourse with demons. This is clearly a most difficult point (as difficult as that of identifying the physical nature of flying saucers!), and Sinistrari gives a remarkable discussion of it. Pointing out that the main object of the discussion is to determine the degree of punishment these sins deserve, he tries to list all the different ways in which the sin of demoniality can be committed. First he remarks: There are quite a few people, over-inflated with their little knowledge, who dare deny what the wisest authors have written, and what everyday experience demonstrates: namely, that the demon, either incubus or succubus, has carnal union not only with men and women but also with animals.

Sinistrari does not deny that some young women often have visions and imagine that they have attended a sabbat. Similarly, ordinary erotic dreams have been classified by the church quite separately from the question we are studying. Sinistrari does not mean such psychological phenomena when he speaks of demoniality; he refers to actual physical intercourse, such as the basic texts on witchcraft discuss. Thus in the Compendium Maleficarum, Gnaccius gives eighteen case histories of witches who have had carnal contact with demons. All cases are vouched for by scholars whose testimony is above question. Besides, St. Augustine himself says in no uncertain terms:

It is a widespread opinion, confirmed by direct or indirect testimony of trustworthy persons, that the Sylvans and Fauns, commonly called Incubi, have often tormented women, solicited and obtained intercourse with them. There are even Demons, which are called Duses [i.e., lutins] by the Gauls, who are quite frequently using such impure practices: this is vouched for by so numerous and so high authorities that it would be impudent to deny it.

Now the devil makes use of two ways in these carnal contacts. One he uses with sorcerers and witches, the other with men and women perfectly foreign to witchcraft.

What Sinistrari is saying here is that two kinds of people may come in contact with the beings he calls demons: those who have made a formal pact with them – and he gives the details of the process for making this pact – and those who simply happen to be contacted by them. The implications of this fundamental statement of occultism for the interpretation of the fairy-faith and of modern UFO stories should be obvious.

The devil does not have a body. Then how does he manage to have intercourse with men and women? How can women have children from such unions? The theologians answer that the devil borrows the corpse of a human being, either male or female, or else he forms with other materials a new body for this purpose. Indeed, we find here the same theory as that expressed by one of the Gentry and quoted by Evans-Wentz: "We can make the old young, the big small, the small big."

The devil then is said to proceed in one of two ways. Either he first takes the form of a female succubus and then has intercourse with a man, or else the succubus induces lascivious dreams in a sleeping man and makes use of the resulting "pollution" to allow the devil to perform the second part of the operation. This is the theory taught by Gnaccius, who gives a great number of examples.

Likewise, Hector Boethius, in Historia Scotorum, documents the case of a young Scot who, for several months, was visited in his bedroom, the windows and doors of which were closed, by a succuba of the most ravishing beauty. She did everything she could to obtain intercourse with him, but he did not yield to her caresses and entreaties.

One point intrigued Sinistrari greatly: such demons do not obey the exorcists and have no fear of relics and other holy objects; thus, they do not fall into the same category as the devils by which people are possessed. But then, are they really creatures of the devil? Should not we place them in a separate category, with the elves and the Elementals they so closely resemble? And then, if such creatures have their own bodies, does the traditional theory – that incubi and succubi are demons who have borrowed human corpses – hold? Could it explain how children are born from such unions? What are the physical characters of such children? Can we agree with Lebrun when he writes: "If the body of these children is thus different from the bodies of other children, their soul will certainly have qualities that will not be common to others: that is why Cardinal Bellarmin thinks Antichrist will be born of a woman having had intercourse with an incubus. " If we admit that the UFO reports quoted earlier in this chapter indicate the phenomenon has genetic contents, then the above questions are fundamental, and it is impotant to see how tradition understood them.

According to Sinistrari:

To theologians and philosophers, it is a fact, that from the copulation of humans [men or women] with the demon, human beings are sometimes born. It is by this process that Antichrist must be born, according to a number of doctors.... Besides, they observe that as the result of a quite natural cause, the children generated in this manner by the incubi are tall, very strong, very daring, very magnificent and very wicked.

The literature thus mentions as possible sons of the demon a list of historical figures that ranges from Plato and Alexander to Caesar, Merlin, and even "that damned hersiarch whose name is Martin Luther!" Sinistrari disagrees with this theory: In spite of all the respect I owe so many great doctors, I do not see how their opinion can stand examination. Indeed, as Pererius observes very well in Commentary on Genesis, Chapter Six, all the strenght, all the power of the human sperm, comes from spirits that evaporate and vanish as soon as they issue from the genital cavities where they were warmly stored. The physicians agree on this. Therefore, it is not possible for the demon to keep the sperm he has received in a sufficient state of integrity to produce generation; for, no matter what the vessel where he could attempt to keep it is, this vessel would have to have a temperature equal to the natural temperature of human genital organs, which is found nowhere but in those same organs. Now, in a vessel where the warmth is not natural, but artificial, spirits are resolved, and no generation is possible.

We also read in the Scriptures (Genesis 6:4) that giants were born as a result of intercourse between the sons of God and the daughters of Man: this is the very letter of the sacred text.

Now, these giants were men of tall stature, as it is said in Baruch 3:26, and far superior to other men. Besides their monstrous size, they called attention by their strenght, their plunders, their tyranny. And it is to the crimes of these giants that we must attribute the main and primary cause of the Flood, according to Corenlius à Lapide in his Commentary on Genesis.

If the intercourse in question has given birth to beings of monstrous proportions, we must see there not the ordinary intercourse of men with women but the operation of the incubi who, owing to their nature, can very well be

called sons of God. This opinion... is not in contradiction with that of Tertullian, according to whom these incubi could be angels who had allowed themselves to commit the sin of luxury with women.

What we have here is a complete theory of contact between our race and another race, nonhuman, different in physical nature, but biologically compatible with us. Angels, demons, fairies, creatures from heaven, hell, or Magonia: they inspire our strangest dreams, shape our destinies, steal our desires.... But who are they?

## 5. The Celestial Component: Signs in Heaven

Apparitions

"They speak all the languages of the earth. They know all about the past and future of the human race – of any human being."

This statement was made in 1968 by a Spanish clerk who claims he has been in contact with extraterrestrials since 1954. "The inhabitants of planet Wolf 424 [ sic] are among us in human form and with false identities. They are far superior to us and very peace-loving. I am in permanent contact with them. They either write to me or call me. We have meetings."

How did he contact these allegedly superior entities? It seems that in 1954 a saucer threw a stone covered with hieroglyphics into the University Gardens, Madrid. Fernando Sesma copied these symbols down, and presto!, two-way communication began. These absurd stories are the nucleus of many modern-day cults.

In Great Britain, similar fantastic rumors are spreading. British scientists, some people claim, have been contacted by a mysterious source through radio and have become involved in undercover activities at the request of extraterrestrials. Some of these scientists have disappeared. Through such contacts, so the story goes, the extraterrestrials hope to control our history. For what purpose? I myself have received letters from induviduals claiming to be members of secret organizations whose headquarters are, quite literally, out of this world. These correspondents informed me that the purpose of their group is to prevent mankind from reaching other worlds in space. Of course, other contactees make exactly opposite claims. The fact remains that irrational belief in nonhuman control of terrestrial destinies is as old as ordinary human politics.

Thus, a Madrid newsman, Armando Puente, claims that Sesma warned him three months before Robert Kennedy's assassination that the senator would be killed. Sesma similarly predicted a wave of UFO sightings in Argentina (a much easier task!).

The same power attributed to saucer people was once the exclusive property of fairies. This was believed by ignorant medieval peasants and scholars as well. Thus, one of the first questions put to Joan of Arc by her inquisitiors was "if she had any knowledge or if she had not assisted at the assemblies held at the fountain of the fairies, near Domremy, around which dance malignant spirits." And another question and answer was thus recorded: "Asked whether she did not believe – prior to the present day – that fairies were malignant spirits, [she] answered she did not know."

Without reopening the entire problem of witchcraft, it is important to note the continuum of beliefs, which leads directly from primitive magic, through mystical experience, the fairy-faith, and religion, to modern flying saucers. The study of witchcraft has shown these subjects to be closely interrelated. And while we are not concerned with individual beliefs in this chapter, we are interested in the social implications of such rumors, which are quite real whether the facts are true or false.

The power of these apparitions can best be seen in some of the major "miracles" of history. At Knock, Ireland, in 1852, the witnesses beheld luminous beings, among them the Virgin: She held her hands extended apart and upward, in a position that none of the witnesses could have previously seen in any statue or picture.

Three witnesses reported noticing her bare feet. One woman, Bridget Trench, was so carried away by the sight that she fervently went to the apparitions to embrace the Virgin's feet. But her arms closed on empty air.

I felt nothing in the embrace but the wall, yet the figures appeared so full and so lifelike that I could not understand it and wondered why my hands could not feel what was so plain and distinct to my sight.

Bridget also remarked how heavily the rain was then falling, but, she added: I felt the ground carefully with my hands, and it was perfectly dry. The wind was blowing from the south, right against the gable, but no rain fell on that portion of the gable where the figures were.

St. John was standing at an angle to the other figures. Dressed as a bishop, he held a large open book in his left hand. The fingers of his right hand were

raised in a gesture of teaching. One of the witnesses, Patrick Hill, went close enough to see the lines and letters in the book.

When the parish priest was told of the apparitions, he said it might be a reflection from the stained-glass windows of the church and quietly spent the rest of the evening at home. The phenomenon lasted several hours. Their clothes soaked through, all the witnesses went home before midnight.

The next morning nothing was left to be seen.

Ten days after the incident, a deaf child was cured and a man born blind saw after his pilgrimage to Knock. Soon seven or eight cures a week were reported: A dying man, so ill that he vomited blood most of the way while being carried to Knock and recieved the Last Sacraments from the Archdeacon on his arrival, was cured instantaneously after drinking some water in which a scrap of cement from the gable wall had been dissolved.

All this came at an unfortunate time for the Catholic Church in Ireland. Most of Archdeacon Cavanagh's fellow priests doubted and disapproved. The Knock church had been built only fifty years earlier, when Irish Catholics had emerged from hiding, and much as in Lourdes and Fatima, the clergy tried at first not to get involved in the pilgrimages. Local and national papers were asked by the clergy to refrain from giving the apparition publicity, while papers hostile to Catholicism printed derisive articles about it.

Attempts to explain the phenomenon by physical means were made. A science professor from Maynooth performed tests for the official commission of inquiry appointed by the Archbishop of Tuam. He used a magic lantern to project photographic images on the gable wall in the presence of twenty priests and testified that the tests ruled out the possibility that the apparition had been a product of a photographic hoax. A correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph made his own tests at a later date and reported that "however the reported apparitions were caused, they could not have been due to a magic lantern."

Many features in this report are identical to those in UFO phenomena: the strange globe of light of varying intensity, the luminous entities within or close to the light, the absence of rain at the site of the apparition, and, finally, the

alleged miraculous cures. All these features are present in the current UFO lore in America.

To those who have not closely followed the specialized UFO literature, the assertion that UFO sightings involve mysterious "cures" will come as a surprise. Take, for instance, the Damon, Texas, report of September 3, 1965, where a policeman was allegedly cured of a wound on his hand when exposed to the light from a hovering object. Or the Petropolis, Brazil, report of October 25, 1957, in which we are told that a girl dying from cancer was saved by a fantastic operation performed by two men who came from the sky. Or the case of "Dr. X," the French doctor who observed two strange objects near his house in October 1968 and was subsequently cured of a large hematoma and of a form of paralysis. Clearly we are dealing here with a pattern reminiscent of medieval folklore.

The Knock case is not the most remarkable instances of a similarity between religious apparitions and UFO sightings, a subject to which we will return in Chapter Seven. And although it took place in Ireland, the miracle aspect is not the most reminiscent of the standard features of the fairy-faith.

An incident occurring at daybreak, on Saturday, December 9, 1531, in Mexico, represents the culmination of everything we have discussed. Of tremendous sociological and psychological impact, it has left physical traces that can still be seen and, indeed, are still an object of devotion today.

A fifty-seven-year-old Aztec Indian whose Nahuatl name was Singing Eagle and whose Spanish name was Juan Diego was walking to the church of Tlaltelolco, near Mexico City. Suddenly he froze in his tracks as he heard a concert of singing birds, sharp and sweet. The air was bitterly cold: no bird in its right mind would sing at such an hour, and yet the harmonious music went on, stopping abruptly. Then someone with a woman's voice called Juan Diego's name. The voice was coming from the top of the hill, which was hidden in "a frosty mist, a brightening cloud." And when he climbed the hill, he saw her. As Ethel Cook Eliot writes in A Woman Clothed with the Sun: The sun wasn't above the horizon, yet Juan saw her as if against the sun because of the golden beams that rayed her person from head to feet. She was a young Mexican girl about fourteen years old and wonderfully beautiful.

So far, we have a perfect beginning for a standard fairy apparition. But in the ensuing dialogue, Juan Diego was told that the girl was Mary and that she desired a temple at that particular place: "So run now to Tenochtitlan [Mexico City] and tell the Lord Bishop all that you have seen and heard."

This was easier to say than to accomplish. Poor Indians were not in the habit of going to the Spanish section of the city, and even less to the bishop's palace. Bravely, Juan ran down the mountain and begged the noble bishop, Don Fray Juan de Zumarraga, to hear his story. Naturally, the bishop, although he was kind to the Indian, did not believe a word of his tale, so Juan went back through the mountains and met the lady a second time. He advised her to send the bishop a more suitable messenger, and he was quite blunt about it.

"Listen, little son," was the sharp answer. "There are many I could send. But you are the one I have chosen for this task. So, tomorrow morning, go back to the Bishop. Tell him it is the Virgin Mary who sends you, and repeat to him my great desire for a church in this place."

The next morning, Juan Diego returned to Mexico City and met again with the patient bishop. Juan Diego was so adamant and seemed so honest in telling his story that Fray Juan de Zumarraga was shaken. He told Juan to ask the apparition for a tangible sign, and he instructed two servants to follow the Indian and watch his actions. They tracked him through the city, observed that he spoke to no one, saw him climb the hills... and then he vanished. They searched the area without finding a trace of him! (Again, the perfect fairy tale.) But Juan had gone to the hill. He gave the apparition the bishop's answer, and she said:

Very well, little son. Come back tomorrow at daybreak. I will give you a sign for him. You have taken much trouble on my account, and I shall reward you for it. Go in peace, and rest.

The next morning, Juan did not come. His uncle – his only relative – was dying. Juan spent the day trying to relieve his sufferings and left him only on Tuesday, to get a priest. As he was running to Tlaltelolco, the apparition again barred his way. Embarrassed, he told her why he had not followed her instructions, and she said:

My little son, do not be distressed and afraid. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Your uncle will not die at this time. This very moment his health is restored. There is no reason now for the errand you set out on, and you can peacefully attend to mine. Go up to the top of the hill: cut the flowers that are growing there and bring them to me.

There were no flowers on the top of the hill, as Juan Diego knew very well. In the middle of December, there could be no flower there, and yet, upon reaching the place, he found Castilian roses, "their petals wet with dew." He cut them and, using his long Indian cape – his tilma – to protect them from the bitter cold, carried them back to the apparition. She arranged the flowers he had dropped in the warp, then tied the lower corners of the tilma behind his neck so that none of the roses would fall. She advised him not to let anybody but the bishop see the sign she had given him and then disappeared. Juan Diego never met her again.

At the bishop's palace several servants made fun of the Indian visionary. They "pushed him around" and tried to snatch the flowers. But when they observed how the roses seemed to dissolve when they reached for them, they were astonished and let him go. Juan was taken once more to the bishop.

Juan Diego put up both hands and untied the corners of crude cloth behind his neck. The looped-up fold of the tilma fell: the flowers he thought were the precious sign tumbled out and lay in an untidy heap on the floor. Alas for the Virgin's careful arrangement!

But Juan's confusion over this mishap was nothing to what he felt immediately after it.

Inside of seconds the Bishop had risen from his chair and was kneeling at Juan's feet, and inside of a minute all the other persons in the room had surged forward and were also kneeling.

The bishop was kneeling before Juan's tilma, and, as Ethel Cook Eliot remarks, "Millions of people have knelt before it since," for it has been placed over the high altar in the basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The tilma consists of two pieces, woven of maguey fibers and sewn together, measuring sixty-six by forty-one inches. On this coarse material, whose color is that of

unbleached linen, a lovely figure can be seen, fifty-six inches tall.

Surrounded by golden rays, it emerges as from a shell of light, clear-cut and lovely in every detail of line and color. The head is bent slightly and very gracefully to the right, just avoiding the long seam. The eyes look downward, but the pupils are visible. This gives an unearthly impression of lovingness and lovableness. The mantle that covers the head and falls to the feet is greenish blue with a border of purest gold, and scattered through with golden stars. The tunic is rose-colored, patterned with a lace-like design of golden flowers.

Below is a crescent moon, and beneath it appear the head and arms of a cherub.

Juan's uncle was cured. As he was awaiting the priest, too weak even to drink the medicine his nphew had prepared, he saw his room suddenly filled with soft light. A luminous figure, that of a young woman, appeared near him. She told him he would get well and informed him of Juan Diego's mission. She also said, "Call me and call my image Santa Maria de Guadalupe" – or so the message was understood.

In the six years that followed the incident, over eight million Indians were baptized. In recent times, some fifteen hundred persons still go to kneel before Juan Diego's tilma every day.

This case reminds us of several important aspects of the many tales of fairies we have reviewed: the mysteious, sweet music announcing that the fairy draws near; the flowers ( roses once again) that grow in an impossible place; and the sign given to the human messenger, which changes nature as he goes away, like the coals that changed to gold given to human midwives by the gnomes; the numerous similar symbols found in countless tales. Indeed, we cannot help but recall here the word of Hartland in his Science of Fairy Tales: "This gift of an object apparently worthless, which turns out, on the conditions being observed, of the utmost value, is a commonplace of fairy transactions.

It is one of the most obvious manifestations of superhuman power." A final aspect is the cosmic symbolism, the crescent moon under the Virgin's feet, as in the lines of Revelation: And there appeared a great sign in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and upon her head a

crown of twelve stars.

## The Functioning Lie

What does it all mean? Is it reasonable to draw a parallel between religious apparitions, the fairy-faith, the reports of dwarf-like beings with supernatural powers, the airship tales in the United States in the last century, and the present stories of UFO landings?

I would strongly argue that it is – for one simple reason: the mechanisms that have generated the various beliefs are identical. Their human context and their effect on humans are constant. The observation of this very deep mechanism is crucial. It has little to do with the problem of knowing whether UFOs are physical objects or not. Attempting to understand the meaning, the purpose, of the so-called flying saucers, as many people are doing today, is just as futile as was the pursuit of the fairies, if one makes the mistake of confusing appearance and reality. The phenomenon has stable, invariant features, some of which we have tried to identify and label clearly. But we have also had to note carefully the chameleon-like character of the secondary attributes of the sightings: the shapes of the objects, the appearances of their occupants, and their reported statements vary as a function of the cultural environment into which they are projected.

As we have seen with the airship stories in Chapter Two, a good number of bearded characters alighted in the Midwest and elsewhere in 1897 to request water from a well, bluestones, or other similar things. The stories witnesses told were believable, if somewhat astounding, to American farmers of the time. The airship itself corresponded to the popular concept of an elaborate flying machine: it had wheels, turbines, wings, powerful lights. There is only one detail not yet dealt with: the fact that the airship, though believable to the witnesses of 1897, is no longer credible to us. We know that the device as described could not possibly fly, unless its outside appearance was designed to decieve potential witnesses. But if so, why? And what was it? What was the purpose of such a simulacrum?

Perhaps the airship, like the fairy tricks and the flying saucers, was a lie so well engineered that its image could sink very deep into human consciousness and then be forgotten – as UFO landings are periodically forgotten, as the

appearances of supernatural beings in the Middle Ages are forgotten.

But, then, are they really forgotten?

Human actions are based on imagination, belief, and faith, not on objective observation – as military and political experts know well. Even science, which claims its methods and theories are rationally developed, is shaped by emotion and fancy, or by fear. And to control human imagination is to shape mankind's collective destiny.

Beyond the question of the physical nature of the UFOs, it is imperative that we study the deeper problem of their impact on our imagination and culture. How the UFO phenomena will affect, in the long run, our views about science, about religion, about the exploration of space, is impossible to measure. But the phenomenon does appear to have a real effect. And a peculiar feature of this mechanism is that it affects equally those who "believe" and those who oppose its reality in a physical sense.

For the time being, the observation can be made that it is possible to make large sections of any population believe in the existence of supernatural races, in the possibility of flying machines, in the plurality of inhabited worlds, by exposing them to a few carefully engineered scenes the details of which are adapted to the culture and symbols of a particular time and place.

Could the meetings with UFO entities be designed to control our beliefs? Consider their changing character. In the United States, they appear as science fiction monsters. In South America, they are sanguinary and quick to get into a fight. In France, they behave like rational, Cartesian, peace-loving tourists. The Irish Gentry, if we believe its spokesmen, was an aristocratic race organized somewhat like a religious-military order. The airship pilots were strongly induvidualistic characters with all the features of the American farmer.

Now consider the following case, which illustrates the same point. The date is October 23, 1954, and the place is near Tripoli, Libya. About 3:00 A.M. an Italian farmer saw a flying craft land a few dozen yards from him. It was shaped like an egg laid horizontally. The upper half was transparent and flooded with very white light; the lower half appeared to be metallic. The fore part had two side ports; the central part had an external ladder. The hind part

had two vertically disposed wheels, one above the other, and two cylindrical protruding tubes. While descending, the craft made a noise similar to that of a compressor "like those used for inflating car tires." No propeller was visible. The fuselage was surrounded by two antennae, one behind the other, and bore a kind of undercarriage with six wheels (two pairs in the fore part of the craft, one pair behind). The machine was about six yards long and three yards wide. Inside it were six men in yellowish coveralls wearing gas masks.

One of them took his mask off in order to blow into a sort of tube. His face appeared to be that of a normal human being.

When the witness got close to the object and put a hand on the ladder, a strong electric shock threw him to the ground. One of the occupants made gestures as if to warn him, for his sake, to keep away from the craft. Another occupant pulled out a wheel and again put it back where it formerly was.

Then, pushing a button, he caused a kind of half-container to cover the wheels. Inside the cockpit, a kind of radio set, complete with wires and operated by a man with earphones, was visible. All six pilots were busy on their instrument panels.

The incident lasted about twenty minutes. The object silently took off and reached an altitude of fifty yards. Then it went east at a dizzying speed.

The imprints left by the undercarriage's wheels on the soft ground have been photographed. They resembled those of normal rubber wheels. Their length was only about two feet.

If it were possible to make three-dimensional holograms with mass, and to project them through time, I would say this is what the farmer saw. And with that theory we would explain many of the apparitions. In numerous UFO cases and in some religious miracles, the beings appeared as three-dimensional images whose feet did not actually touch the ground. But what about the other physical actions, such as the electric shocks?

As we read the account of the Libyan landing case, it is tempting to assume that the farmer, far from witnessing by chance the maneuvers of interplanetary visitors, was deliberately exposed to a scene designed to be recorded by him

and transmitted to us: hence, the gas masks, the instrument panels, and the radio set "complete with wires."

The same is true with the following Italian case, which took place in Abbiate Buazzone, near Varese, on April 24, 1950:

At about 10:00 P.M. Bruno Facchini heard and saw sparks which he attributed to a storm, but he soon discovered a dark mass hovering between a pole and a tree two hundred yards from his house. A man dressed in tight-fitting clothes and wearing a helmet appeared to be making repairs. There were three other figures working around the huge craft. This work being over, a trap through which light had been shining was closed, and the thing took off.

Other details were as follows: the object made a sound similar to that of a giant beehive and the air seemed strangely warm around it. Two of the men were standing on the ground near a ladder; the third one was on a telescopic elevator, the base of which touched the ground, and was holding something near a group of pipes: this produced the sparks seen by Facchini.

They were about five feet nine inches tall, dressed in gray diving suits with an oval transparent glass in front of their faces, which were concealed behind gray masks. From the fore portion of the masks a flexible pipe emerged at the level of the mouth. They wore earphones. Inside the craft could be seen a series of oxygen-type containers and many dials.

When Facchini offered his help, the men talked among themselves in gutteral sounds, and one of them took a camera-like device from around his neck and projected a beam of light on Facchini, who tumbled away for several yards. He was then caught by a rush of air and thrown again to the ground. They subsequently ignored him as they recovered the elevator and brought it inside the craft, which took off.

After a sleepless night, Facchini returned to the site and found some metal fragments left by the soldering operation, also four circular imprints and patches of scorched grass. He revealed the observation only ten days later, when his doctor treated him for the pains and bruises resulting from his fall and advised him to call police. Ministry of Defense technicians who examined the metal samples found them to consists of an "anti-friction material very

resistant to heat." The incident had other witnesses, who testified privately.

Had Mr. Facchini been exposed deliberately to a faked apparition of space beings? What could be the purpose of such an elaborate hoax? Who can afford to contrive such a complex scheme, for so little apparent result? Is human imagination alone capable of playing such tricks on itself? Or should we hypothesize that an advanced race somewhere in the universe and sometime in the future has been showing us three-dimensional space operas for the last two thousand years, in an attempt to guide our civilization? If so, do they deserve our congratulations?

Are we dealing instead with a parallel universe, another dimension, where there are human races living, and where we may go at our expense, never to return to the present? Are these races only semihuman, so that in order to maintain contact with us, they need crossbreeding with men and women of our planet? Is this the origin of the many tales and legends where genetics plays a great role: the symbolism of the Virgin in occultism and religion, the fairy tales involving human midwives and changelings, the sexual overtones of the flying saucer reports, the biblical stories of intermarriage between the Lord's angels and terrestrial women, whose offspring were giants? From that mysteious universe, are higher being projecting objects that can materialize and dematerialize at will? Are the UFOs "windows" rather than "objects"? There is nothing to support these assumptions, and yet, in view of the historical continuity of the phenomenon, alternatives are hard to find, unless we deny the reality of all the facts, as our peace of mind would indeed prefer.

The problem cannot be solved yet. If we absolutely must have something to believe, then we should join one of the numerous groups of people who have all the "answers." Read Menzel's books or the Condon Report, that fine piece of scientific recklessness. Or subscribe to the magazines that "prove" that "flying saucers are real and from outer space." I am not writing for such people, but for those few who have gone through all this and have graduated to a higher, cleaner level of perception of the total meaning of that tenuous dream that underlies the many nightmares of human history – for those who have recognized the delicate levers of the collective unconscious.

Conjectures

It may seem useless to conjecture about a mystery that, according to all evidence, remains unidentified. But in this book we have already seen that the UFO phenomenon has left a clear series of marks in the beliefs and attributes of our contemporaries, in a pattern not only identifiable but also by no means unprecedented. It is not pointless to try to devise critical tests, both sociological and physical, to determine whether or not purposeful design is involved in the phenomena the witnesses describe.

Whenever a set of unusual circumstances is presented it is in the nature of the human mind to analyze it until a rational pattern is encountered at some level. But it is quite conceivable that nature should present us with circumstances so deeply organized that our observational and logical errors would entirely mask the pattern to be identified. To the scientist, there is nothing surprising in this statement. The history of science consists in dual progress: the refinement of observational techniques and the improvement of analytical methods. On the other hand, the proposition that the universe might contain intelligent creatures exhibiting such an organization that no model of it could be constructed on the basis of current human concepts is also theoretically plausible. The behavior of such beings would necessarily appear random or absurd or would go undetected, especially if these beings possessed physical means of retiring at will beyond the human perceptual range, or into other dimensions. Such physical actions would appear on scientific records as mere random accidents, easily ascribable to instrumental error or to a variety of natural causes.

Considering the UFO phenomenon as a special instance of that more fundamental question, we are presented with the dual possibility of very long-term unsolvability and continued manifestation, and this is true whether the phenomenon is natural or artificial in nature.

The development of a new myth feeding upon this duality is entirely predictable. In the absence of a rational solution to the mystery, and due to intense public interest, it is quite likely that in coming years every brand of charlatanism will use it as a base, although it is not possible to predict its exact form. We may very well be living the early years of a new mythological movement, and it may eventually give our technological age its Olympus or its Valhalla, whether we regard such a development as an asset or as a blow to our culture. Because many observations of UFO phenomena appear self-

consistent and at the same time irreconcilable with scientific knowledge, a logical vacuum has been created that human imagination tries to fill with fantasy. Such situations have been frequently observed in the past, and they have given us both the highest and the basest forms of religious, poetic, and political activity. It is entirely possible that the UFO phenomenon will give rise to similar developments, because its manifestations coincide with a renewal of interest in the human value of technology.

It is precisely because science is the process through which unsolvable emotional arguments can be transformed into organized sets of sub-problems amenable to rational analysis that the UFO phenomenon is interesting. Therefore, to say that UFOs are not a scientific problem, or even to pose the question of whether they are or not, is to utter an absurdity. There is no such thing as a scientific problem; it is the man who looks at the problem who is or is not scientific in his approach. Science is an object in the human mind, not a characteristic we are at liberty either to bestow upon or to withdraw from every funny-looking contraption that happens to cross our skies.

For a scientist, the only valid question is to decide whether the phenomenon can be studied by itself, or whether it is an instance of a deeper problem. This book attempts to illustrate, and only to illustrate, the latter approach. And my conclusion is that, through the UFO phenomenon, we have the unique opportunities to observe folklore in the making and to gather scientific material at the deepest source of human imagination. We will be the object of much contempt by future students of our civilization if we allow this material to be lost, for "tradition is a meteor which, once it falls, cannot be rekindled."

If we decide to avoid extreme speculation, but make certain basic observations from the existing data, five principal facts stand out rather clearly from our analysis so far: Fact 1. There has been among the public, in all countries, since the middle of 1946, an extremely active generation of colorful rumors. They center on a considerable number of observations of unknown machines close to the ground in rural areas, the physical traces left by these machines, and their various effects on humans and animals.

Fact 2. When the underlying archetypes are extracted from these rumors, the extraterrestrial myth is seen to coincide to a remarkable degree with the fairy-faith of Celtic countries, the observations of the scholars of past ages, and the

widespread belief among all peoples concerning entities whose physical and psychological description place them in the same category as the present-day ufonauts.

Fact 3. The entities human witnesses report to have seen, heard, and touched fall into various biological types. Among them are beings of giant stature, men indistinguishable from us, winged creatures, and various types of monsters. Most of the so-called pilots, however, are dwarfs and form two main groups: (1) dark, hairy beings – identical to the gnomes of medieval theory – with small, bright eyes and deep, rugged, "old" voices; and (2) beings – who answer the description of the sylphs of the Middle Ages or the elves of the fairy-faith – with human complexions, oversized heads, and silvery voices. All the beings have been described with and without breathing apparatus.

Beings of various categories have been reported together. The overwhelming majority are humanoid.

Fact 4. The entities' reported behavior is as consistently absurd as the appearance of their craft is ludicrous. In numerous instances of verbal communications with them, their assertions have been systematically misleading. This is true for all cases on record, from encounters with the Gentry in the British Isles to conversations with airship engineers during the 1897 Midwest flap and discussions with the alleged Martians in Europe, North and South America, and elsewhere. This absurd behavior has had the effect of keeping professional scientists away from the area where that activity was taking place. It has also served to give the saucer myth its religious and mystical overtones.

Fact 5. The mechanism of the apparitions, in legendary, historical, and modern times, is standard and follows the model of religious miracles. Several cases, which bear the official stamp of the Catholic Church (such as those in Fatima and Guadalupe), are in fact – if one applies the deffinitions strictly – nothing more than UFO phenomena where the entity has delivered a message having to do with religious beliefs rather than with space or engineering.

Given the above five facts I believe the following three propositions to be true: Proposition 1. The behavior of a superior race would not necessarily appear purposeful to a human observer. Scientists who brush aside UFO

reports because "obviously intelligent visitors would not behave like that" simply have not given serious thought to the problem of nonhuman intelligence.

Observation and deduction agree, in fact, that the organized action of a superior race must appear absurd to the inferior one. That this does not preclude contact and even cohabitation is an obvious fact of daily life on our planet, where humans, animals, and insects have interwoven activities in spite of their different levels of nervous system organization.

Proposition 2. If we recognize that the structure and nature of time is as much of a puzzle to modern physicists as it was to Reverend Kirk, for example, then it follows that any theory of the universe that does not take our ignorance into account is bound to remain in academic exercise.

Proposition 3. The entire mystery we are discussing contains all the elements of a myth that could be utilized to serve long-term social manipulation purposes, as illustrated by the curious link between the contents of the reports and the progress of human technology, from aerial ships to dirigibles to ghost rockets to flying saucers and to biogenetic engineering – a link that has never recieved a satisfactory interpretation in a sociological framework.

With respect to the last point, I find it remarkable that the first instance of a blackout caused by a UFO should be found in Twilight Bar, a play written by Arthur Koestler in 1933. During the play, which takes place on a small unnamed island where civil war is about to break out, an enormous meteor flies over the town with a high-pitched whistling sound as all the lights go out. The craft plunges into the sea, and two beings, dressed in white coveralls and moving as if in a trance, come ashore and introduce themselves as messengers sent to warn mankind that it has three short days in which to mend its ways. Otherwise, the creatures say, mankind will be destroyed and the earth will be repopulated by a superior race.

The first reference to UFO effects on car ignition came in a novel written in 1950 by Bernard Newman entitled The Flying Saucer. It is true that when Newman's book was written, some UFO reports involving magnetic disturbances (of the compass) were already circulating. Even in 1944, the military had already amassed considerable information about unidentified flying objects, the first large-scale scientific investigation having been done by

the National Bureau of Standards the previous year. But the fact remains that the coincidence between these works of imagination and the actual details of the reports that came from the public is a remarkable one, and it opens the way to unlimited speculation.

Knowledge of the structure of time would imply superior knowledge of destiny (I am using the word "destiny" to designate not the fate of individuals but the mechanism through which physical events unfold and the canvas upon which they are implemented). Before we go on to the question of the psychic component of the experience, perhaps I also should remind the reader of two points we have touched upon earlier: (1) the relativity of time in Magonia, a theory passed on to us in numerous tales we have reviewed; and (2) that astonishing little remark made by a sylph to Facius Cardan, which antedates quantum theory by four centuries: "He added that God created [the universe] from moment to moment, so that should He desist for an instant the world would perish."

As Jerome Cardan says, "Be this fact or fable, so it stands."

## 6. The Psychic Component: Metalogic

Return of a Specter

It is difficult for the public to tolerate a mystery that refues to die. When encounters with unidentified flying objects were suddenly reported all over the United States during the first half of October 1973, after seven quiet years, and when two men from Pascagoula, Mississippi, told their tale of abduction by grotesque robot-like creatures, the public recognized the return of a specter that science had pronounced dead and buried with great pomp just a few years before. The burial had been performed by the University of Colorado at the cost of half a million dollars, and the eight-hundred page postmortem had clearly stated that the study of UFOs "cannot be justified in the expectation that science will be advanced thereby." Professor Edward Condon, who led the study, felt so strongly about the uselessness of the whole thing that he destroyed the project files. Three days before his death, in March 1974, he was still urging a physicist friend to drop his study of UFOs. When Condon was told that a documentary was being prepared, he advocated that all the footage be burned. The Air Force subsequently closed down its own public relations office for the monitoring of sighting reports (Project Blue Book) with a similar declaration.

When the sightings again filled the world press, it became clear that the subject of UFOs was as alive as ever. It was easy for flying saucer enthusiasts everywhere to exclaim: "We told you so!" But it was not easy for the witnesses to understand what they had seen. Ant it was even harder for them to forget it. Some never will.

A husband and wife who drove a truck in the Midwest were fired from their job when they reported that an object had followed them along a Missouri road one October night, emitting a burst of light that blinded the husband (inducing some loss of eyesight) and caused the plastic frame of his glasses to melt. Like the Pascagoula story of robot-like monsters, the facts were unbelievable to local scientists who examined them out of the context of the overall phenomenon. Professor Condon had had the same problem. Incredibly, all the members of his team had been selected because they had no previous

knowledge of the subject! Yet it is only when one analyzes the thousands of similar occurrences in the last forty years and in all countries that one achieves some degree of understanding.

During the 1970s, the report of paranormal events in connection with close encounters with UFOs seems to have become the rule rather than the exception, and most investigators have found it very difficult to deal with this aspect of the cases because it does not match their expectation of what an extraterrestrial visit would be. Such paranormal events might take the form of minor unexplained coincidences in which a man might have had a dream prior to the sighting (or answered a knock on the door only to find no one there, as happened to a policeman who later the same evening reported being paralyzed by two occupants of an unknown craft). Sometimes the event was more significant.

A number of witnesses, for example, reported perceiving distinct messages inside their heads, a fact they interpreted as an indication of a telepathic ability on the part of the UFO occupants. Still other categories of psychic events are the distortions of time and space reported by witnesses and the apparent violations of physical laws represented by the sudden appearance and disappearance of physical craft. And as we saw in previous chapters, close observers often report something akin to a trip into a parallel time stream. These observations constitute collectively what I call the "psychic component" of the UFO phenomenon.

Another aspect of the sightings that I find interesting is the very same aspect that has made scientists from other disciplines turn away in disgust; I am referring to their apparent absurdity. My field of research is the nature of information, its use by people, its transliteration in the form of documents, its application to artificial intelligence, and its representation in the behavior of automata. The techniques of this field can be used for compiling observations, sorting them out, classifying them, and looking for new patterns. A few scientists are pursuing this task in spite of the apparent absurdity of the data. Their work to unravel the UFO enigma centers increasingly on the psychic component of the reports that is indicative either of actual communication with the witness or of direct influence unexplainable by ordinary physical means.

Over the Accelerator

In the foothills of the California coastal range, just west of the city of Menlo Park where the Stanford linear accelerator plunges straight under the newly constructed expressway, there is a spot of unusual beauty. It is situated within a mile or so of a densely populated area, yet it gives one a feeling of utter loneliness; the linear accelerator stretches deep into this valley, guarded by wire fences, yet the fields around it have kept a sort of bucolic charm. Where the accelerator ends there is a funnel-shaped depression that is not visible from the road. It is from that depression that a man saw an unusual object rise one evening in February 1972.

The man was first attracted to the object by a humming sound it made (let us note once again that humming sounds, buzzing noises, and sounds compared to the swarming of bees are commonly reported as the auditory perception associated with a UFO). He stopped his car, and he and his companion got out. The hum became more distinct as the object came into view. It was glowing red.

It flew in a straight line up the hill, as if following the roof of the elongated tunnel. Then it flew down again and was lost from sight in the valley. But not for long. It soon came back into view, and this time it took off, rising very high and very fast as it passed overhead. The two men below saw it clearly: it was somewhat like looking directly at the sun, they said, although contours of the light were sharp. The impression was not like observing a strong projector attached to a flying object; it was more like looking through a window that "opened on the inside of a star."

The witness who told me this story mentioned having previously seen unidentified objects. On a certain occasion in Montana he had observed two disk-shaped craft crossing his path, and they had come to hover in a field. He walked toward them and approached within seventy-five feet. He had the intense feeling of being under observation, even at that distance. He used the word "communication."

"But how could you tell?" I asked him. "You have mentioned no window, no indication that there was life on these objects."

"Have you ever been close to a whale?" the witness asked me, implying that he had the vague feeling that the object somehow was aware of him, as a wild

animal is aware of, but appears to ignore, the presence of a person.

Do Not Report This!

Accounts such as the one I have just quoted abound in a corner of the psychic house that too few people interested in paranormal phenomena ever take the trouble to visit. In the last twenty-five years, at least ten thousand sightings of unidentified flying objects have been filed away unexplained by competent investigators (I am not referring here to the number of cases reported but only to those unsolved, and my figure is a conservative one), but no bridge has yet been built between this body of data and the evidence that exists for psychic phenomena such as precognition, psychokinesis, and telepathy. Such a bridge is needed, not only because current research on parapsychology could shed light on some of the more mystifying UFO incidents, but also because in return, an understanding of the nature of the UFO phenomenon could provide new insights into unusual events that have not yet been duplicated in the laboratory. It would give a clue to the mechanism of some psychic processes.

The nature of the problem can be illustrated by another example, a report given to me by a woman living in Berkeley, California, who once observed a series of five round objects crossing the sky over East San Francisco Bay. She immediately thought they must be balloons. Then the first one accelerated and, upon reaching a certain spot, shot straight out of sight at an unbelievable speed.

The second object did the same a few moments later. Then the third object dashed ahead and vanished in the sky. And the fourth, and finally the fifth. The sky was again empty. But in the mind of the witness there was a strange thought, the strong suggestion that this "was all right for her to see." This was accompanied by another thought which almost came as an explicit message: this was nothing that she should report. And, indeed, she went home without breathing a word of the event to anyone, until she attended a lecture where I raised the question of the possibility of unconscious or repressed contact. How frequently witnesses decide to withhold this kind of information has already been noted.

If we disregard the last part of the woman's testimony, she is simply another person among millions of Americans who believe that, at one time or another, they have seen a UFO. But do we have a right to disregard that section of her

report? And what happens if we take into consideration the fact that she distinctly felt a direct imperative message had been implanted in her mind, and that it was as much a part of the occurrence as her sensory observation of five luminous objects? What happens if we examine the files of sightings with an open mind regarding such psychic components? We find that phenomena of precognition, telepathy, and even healing are not unusual among the reports, especially when they involve close-range observation of an object or direct exposure to its light.

The Case of Dr. X

The following case is among the most thoroughly investigated accounts of the interaction between human percipients (those who have "percieved" the phenomenon by whatever means) and the phenomenon of UFOs. It involves a medical doctor who holds an official position in southern France. What is unusual about this case, which occurred the night of November 1, 1968, is that competent investigators (including an astrophysicist, a psychiatrist, and a physiologist) were able to gain rapid access to the data and to monitor the development of subsequent events without interference from the press or from government authorities. The witness wants absolutely no publicity in connection with his experiences. Neither his patients nor his immediate family know of the events.

Shortly before 4:00 A.M., the doctor was awakened by the calls of his 14-month-old baby.

Experiencing some pain because three days earlier he had injured his leg while chopping wood and still had a large hematoma (an area of accumulated blood under the skin), he got up and found the baby gesturing toward the window with excitement. Through the shutters, the doctor saw what he first took to be flashes of lightning, but he paid little attention to this, gave a bottle of water to the baby, and went on to inspect the house, for it was raining very hard (though no thunder could be heard). The light flashes continued, coming from the western part of the wide landscape that can be seen from the south of the house, which is built on the side of a hill. Opening a large window that leads onto the terrance, the witness first observed the objects. There were two of them, disk-shaped, horizontal, silvery-white on top and bright red underneath.

Other details of the objects that the doctor was later able to recall include horizontal "antennae" and a vertical antennae on top, while a perfectly cylindrical beam of white light illuminated the mist under the disks. The flashes, which occurred with a periodicity of about one second, were marked by a brief increase in the luminosity of both disks, followed by a sudden burst of light between them. The objects were moving in unison toward the left – that is, toward the center of the doctor's field of view – and they were coming closer, their apparent size increasing while the object that seemed farthest away came to align itself with the closer one. While they were still approaching (following the trajectory of the beams on the ground enabled the witness to ascertain that they were indeed coming closer), these two disks went through a remarkable transformation: their "antennae" came into contact, the two beams interpenetrated, the flashing activity stopped, and the two craft merged.

There was now a single disk, directly facing the window and still coming nearer, with a single beam of white light underneath. After a time (the witness is unable to recall how long), the disk began flipping from a horizontal to a vertical position, until it was seen as a circle standing on edge. The shaft of light, which had been drawn by the rotation into a sweeping movement toward the house, came to illuminate the entire front and shone straight into the doctor's face. At that instant a bang was heard and the disk went away, leaving behind a whitish glow which was slowly blown away by the wind.

After these events, the witness wrote a detailed account of his sighting, with sketches. He awoke his wife and told her what had happened. At that point it was she who observed, with considerable amazement, that the swelling and pain in his leg had completely disappeared. In the days that followed, he became aware that all the after-effects of a wound he had recieved during the Algerian war had also dissipated.

French science writer Aime Michel, a researcher with the French radio and television organization, visited the witness on November 8, six days after the sighting, and found him tired; he had lost weight since the observation and was very distressed by what had happened to him. That same day he experienced cramps and pains in the abdomen, and a red pigmentation appeared around the navel, forming a triangle. By November 17 this seemingly preposterous

phenomenon was well developed. Examinations by a dermatologist led to negative results, but the specialist was so intrigued by this triangular pigmentation without a cause that he decided to document it as a report to the French Academy of Medicine. The witness – who had not told the specialist that everything had started with his observation of a UFO – requested that on the contrary he given the phenomenon no publicity. During the night of November 13-14, the doctor had had a dream in which a triangular pattern was seen connected with a flying disk. The same triangle appeared on the baby's stomach a day or so after the witness's examination. The psychosomatic explanation first proposed by Aime Michel had to be discarded.

When the investigator (who kept the witness under close observation) published the results of his two-year follow-up of the case, he noted that there had been no recurrence of either the war sequelae or the wound on the leg. The peculiar triangle, however, continued to come and go on both the father and the son, and would stay visible for two or three days at a time, even when the child was away and staying with his grandmother, who knew nothing of the sighting and was very much alarmed when she saw the triangular pigmentation. The recurrence of the triangle was observed every year and was again recorded on film in 1986.

Like the grandmother, friends of the family still know nothing, but they have noted a change in the mental attitudes of the doctor and his wife: they seem to have acquired an almost mystical acceptance of the events of life and death, which is puzzling to those who had known them previously. Finally, there is the matter of the paranormal phenomena that now take place around them. Coincidences of a telepathic nature are frequently reported, and the doctor has allegedly, on at least one occasion, experienced levitation without being able to control it. Clocks and electrical circuits have been affected, apparently without cause.

Such phenomena are not unprecedented. Cases of uncontrolled levitation or gravity effects have been reported in connection with UFOs. In one case, which took place in 1954 in the French countryside, a man who was coming back from the fields with his horse had to let go of the bridle as the animal was lifted several feet into the air – a dark, circular object was flying fast over the trail they were following.

Neither is the change in life patterns an uncommon fact among witnesses of close encounters with such objects. An awareness of the paranormal has been inspired by such sightings in men like Edgar Cayce. As a child, Cayce met a woman who appeared out of a sphere of radiant light and told him that he would be able to heal the sick when he grew up. In the words of Thomas Sugrue: As soon as the weather was good he went back to his retreat in the woods. There, one afternoon in May... he became aware of the presence of someone else. He looked up. A woman was standing before him.... "Your prayers have been heard," she said, "tell me what you would like most of all, so that I may give it to you." "Most of all I would like to be helpful to others, and especially to children when they are sick." Suddenly she was no longer there. He looked at the place where she had stood, trying to see her in the beams of light, but she was gone.

Edgar Cayce's sighting is reminiscent of several cases that fall into the category of religious experiences, although the initial observation is often linked to an unusual flying object, as in the "miracles" of Lourdes and Fatima, which we will analyze in Chapter Seven, and in the visions that led to the founding of the Mormon Church. Such miracles often give to the precipients healing or prophetic powers.

Metalogic

What do we know of the nature of the communication that is reported to occur between human witnesses and the occupants of the UFOs? I have earlier commented that, on the surface, such communication appears to be simply absurd. The word absurd, however, is misleading; I prefer the expression metalogical. When a witness meets a UFO occupant who asks, "What time is it?" and replies, "It's 2:30," only to be bluntly told, "You lie – it is 4 o'clock" (this actually happened in France in 1954), the story is not simply absurd. It has a symbolic meaning beyond the apparent contradiction of the dialogue. Could it be that the true meaning of the dialogue is "time is not what you think it is," or "any measurement of time can only be relative"? In 1961, similarly, Barney Hill found himself trying to explain to the humanoid examining him that time was an important concept for us on earth. The humanoid appeared not to understand what he meant. The point of these incidents seems to have been to convey the fact that consciousness transcended time itself.

Situations such as these often have the deep poetic and paradoxical quality of Eastern religious tales ("What is the sound of one hand clapping?") and the mystical expressions of the Cabala, such as references to a "dark flame." If you strive to convey a truth that lies beyond the semantic level made possible by your audience's language, you must construct apparent contradictions in terms of ordinary meaning. In the above contact case in France, the next question was about space and again was absurd ("Am I in Italy or Germany?" asked the UFO pilot). What scientist would take such a story seriously? Even a priest might avoid it, for fear of demons! In fact, some witnesses have thought they had seen demons because the creature had the unpredictability and mischievousness associated with popular conceptions of the devil. If you wanted to bypass the intelligentsia and the church, remain undetectable to the military system, leave undisturbed the political and administrative levels of a society, and at the same time implant deep within that society far-reaching doubts concerning its basic philosophical tenets, this is exactly how you would have to act. At the same time, of course, such a process would have to provide its own explanation to make ultimate detection impossible. In other words, it would have to project an image just beyond the belief structure of the target society. It would have to disturb and reassure at the same time, exploiting both the gullibility of the zealots and the narrow-mindedness of the debunkers. This is exactly what the UFO phenomenon does.

Metalogic is the form of consistency found in statements like: "Does a unicorn have a horn in the middle of her forehead?" - Yes. "Is there such a thing as a unicorn?" - No.

I have pointed out that the concept current among most flying-saucer enthusiasts that the unidentified flying objects are simply craft used by visitors from another planet is naive. The explanation is too simple-minded to account for the diversity of the reported behavior of the occupants and their percieved interaction with human beings. Could this concept serve precisely a diversionary role in masking the real, infinitely more complex nature of the technology that gives rise to the sightings?

Observations similar to the landing at Pascagoula (where two fishermen claimed to have been abducted by "clawmen") have been made every year in the United States since 1947. A catalogue of well-documented close encounter

cases would hold the details of well over two thousand cases of that type, from all countries, indicating that a formidable impact is being made on our collective psyche. Yet what trace has this produced on scientific efforts? A small one indeed: a few courageous astronomers are beginning to revise the probability estimates for other civilizations in space; much is made of the possibility of detecting radio signals from other solar systems; and a few physicists are beginning to voice their doubts concerning Dr. Condon's biases. Against such a background I am afraid that my own speculations may contradict both the ideas of the believers and the assumptions of the skeptics.

Here then, is a brief statement of five new propositions based upon the material we have reviewed so far:

1. The things we call unidentified flying objects are neither objects nor flying. They can dematerialize, as some reliable photographs seem to show, and they violate the laws of motion as we know them.

2. UFOs have been seen throughout history and have consistently recieved (or provided) their own explanation within the framework of each culture. In antiquity their occupants were regarded as gods; in medieval times, as magicians; in the nineteenth century, as scientific geniuses; in our own time, as interplanetary travelers. (Statements made by occupants of the 1897 airship included such declarations as "We are from Kansas" and even "We are from anywhere... but we'll be in Greece tomorrow.") 3. UFO reports are not necessarily caused by visits from space travelers. The phenomenon could be a manifestation of a much more complex technology. If time and space are not as simple in structure as physicists have assumed until now, then the question "where do they come from?" may be meaningless; they could come from a place in time. If consciousness can be manifested outside the body, then the range of hypotheses can be even wider.

4. The key to an understanding of the phenomenon lies in the psychic effects it produces (or the psychic awareness it makes possible) in its observers. Their lives are often deeply changed, and they develop unusual talents with which they may find it difficult to cope. The proportion of witnesses who do come forward and publish accounts of these experiences is quite low; most of them choose to remain silent.

5. Contact between human percipients and the UFO phenomenon always occurs under conditions controlled by the latter. Its characteristic feature is a factor of absurdity that leads to a rejection of the story by the upper layers of the target society and an absorption at a deep unconscious level of the symbols conveyed by the encounter. The mechanism of this resonance between the UFO symbol and the archetypes of the human unconscious has been abundantly demonstrated by Carl Jung, whose book Flying Saucers makes many references to the age-old significance of the signs in the sky.

I am not regarding the phenomenon of the UFOs as the unknowable, uncontrollable game of a higher order of beings. Neither is it likely, in my view, that an encounter with UFOs would add to the human being anything it did not already possess. Everything works as if the phenomenon were the product of a technology that followed well-defined rules and patterns, though fantastic by ordinary human standards. It has so far posed no apparent threat to national defense and seems to be indifferent to the welfare of individual witnesses, leading many to assume that we may be dealing with a still-undiscovered natural occurrence ("It cannot be intelligent," say some people, "because it does not attack us!"). But its impact in shaping man's long-term creativity and unconscious impulses is probably enormous. The fact that we have no methodology to deal with such an impact is only an indication of how little we know about our own psychic world.

Aveyron, or the Essence of Prophecy

Two well-investigated cases have contained striking psychic elements. One took place in Aveyron, France, and the other one in Kansas. They support the five propositions mentioned above.

On June 15, 1966, in Aveyron (a region of France situated near the mid-Pyrenees) a seventy-six-year-old woman made the first in a long and fascinating series of sightings on an isolated farm. The farmhouse itself is old, with ten rooms whose windows face south and command an excellent view.

I was at the windows – just for a moment – because at my age you need a breath of air wherever you are. But never have I seen lights like that, nor things like that! They weren't just lights, they were fires!

The old woman became fearful, and the words she used to describe her anguish convey the precise feeling that many witnesses have tried to express in all languages: All these fires – I'm too old, I don't want to see things like that. If this thing's going to move about like that, what's to become of us all? Afterwards it moved again, over by the corner of the vineyard, you remember [speaking to her son-in-law], that's when I called you, that's when I was frightened, but if that comes any closer, that's going to go in the barn and everything will go up in smoke, the house and us with it – so I called him, I called him.

Mr. Fernand Lagarde, a local researcher who conducted a very thorough investigation of the events, reported that "the haunting thought of fire frightens all country people, and so, distracted and scared, she calls her son-in-law to help, and later she will tell us that she went to bed fully clothed, for fear of what might be to come. This is a story with all the ring of truth about it."

The fiery objects are spherical, and they crossed the fields with deliberate motion. The son-in-law, who worked the farm, also observed what the old woman had seen, and went out to investigate. The objects, he said, were rounded on top and rather flattened underneath, and they vanished on the spot as if controlled by a switch. At one point there were six of them, less than a mile away; they moved in one line at the speed of a tractor, and they entered a larger luminous object that appeared as a sort of fiery tree, an illuminated shell. Everything disappeared, and the witnesses retired in complete puzzlement.

This feeling was still very clear in the taped interviews I heard during a trip to France, and Lagarde confirmed that everything appeared to the witnesses disconcerting and irrational. The events went on "in the calm night, without a sound, unreal, and dreamlike." The luminous spheres came back to the farm in Aveyron six months later, on January 6, 1967. The farmer had gone out to check on the animals when he suddenly saw one sphere not more than fifty yards away. He decided to "get round behind that thing to see what it was," having assumed that it had a front and a back, but when he got outside the gate, the sphere was next to it, waiting for him. He had left it inside the yard a moment before. The man then decided to take a small path through the fields and again get behind that object, but the sphere proceeded to follow him over about sixty

yards and went to block the entrance to the path!

That there thing followed me for about sixty metres, near enough... and then there was a narrow bit where I wanted to get through, I did... so's to get round behind, then "that" followed me right along, right along... till I stopped there, where I wanted to get round behind, and the "machine" stops there too, right at the narrow bit. So I says, now... 'tain's no use to argue.... I can't get past!

Coming back into the house, the farmer called his son, and going outside they saw six spheres this time and were so afraid that they went back inside the house. The larger shell-shaped object was there, too, and it was giving off a beam of light, as a searchlight would: There was a searchlight on top, right at the end of it, and it lit up that window up there, lit up the whole room it did.... I had the window open there opposite.

Was it a diffused beam, or rather very concentrated?

Oh, concentrated, very concentrated.

And it lit up your room?

Yes, lit it up all right... off and on like... it was turning... kept on turning.

It was turning round and round, like a beacon?

Yes, sometimes it lit up the next room down there... kept on turning around... but there it was, 23:00 already, maybe 23:15, something like that.

Then, sudden-like, everything died out. It all died out, and I didn't see anything more. I don't know if it had gone, or if it was still there.

The culmination of the series of sightings in Aveyron took place on January 11, 1967, when the son saw the "shell" coming down near the house. He drove near it and could see that it was very large indeed. Two of the smaller spheres entered it, then it became very bright and the witness heard a whistling sound. The "shell" tilted at a forty-five-degree angle and was gone at an incredible speed.

Another object came. It was shaped like a disk, with two transparent cupolas

on top of it, and inside...

Well now, inside... it seemed to me to be lit up inside with a green light... inside the two domes... and I saw... mind you I can't be sure about this... it was very dark, you might have said there was some sort of fog, either inside or outside... don't know which... inside or outside the two domes. Anyway I thought I saw two... well, I saw two people like... human beings, see?... Cosmonauts. They wore overalls like aircrew, green trimmed with white.

The object itself was hovering with a motion forward and back, pitching and rolling. The investigator asked, "Did you have the car doors shut during this time?" The response was: Yes, yes... I must have opened the window, I think.... Or perhaps it was afterwards, when it went off, that I opened the window... and then I felt a wave of heat, and I felt myself almost... I couldn't move hand or foot, for as long as it lasted.

After about a week, the witness began to have trouble with his sleeping habits. He would sleep as much as twenty hours a day, and in spite of his parents' advice, he didn't want to consult a doctor.

He simply couldn't stay on his feet when exhaustion hit him, and this went on for about two months.

Something else happened to him in connection with his sleeping pattern: in the early morning hours, between 4:00 and 5:00 A.M. It seemed to him that he was "floating off". His mind would be alert, although his body was paralyzed, and he would feel his consciousness leaving his body.

In later conversations with the investigators, I learned of changes in the witness's behavior and belief system. He surprised everyone in this remote area of France by recommending to young people that they study astronomy and science in general with great care. And, in a private discussion with one of the researchers who have for several years followed up this remarkable case, he casually mentioned that he might soon have to write a book. It was pointed out to him that he could hardly write even the most simple letter. " They told me not to worry about that," he said. "When the time ir right, I will know what to put on paper."

We are touching here the very essence of prophecy. They told him.... But who are they? It seems that, in recurrent dreams since the incident with the flying disk, he has seen a number of men dressed in red and each holding a book and pointing at it. Nothing else happens in the dream. Just the men and the book.

More recently, he has traveled over two hundred miles to visit the investigator of this case, who had left precise instructions to keep him closely informed of any new and important development. When he was in the investigator's house, he did have something important to say, but he could not talk.

The part of his brain that handled verbal expression and the mechanism of language could not process the data that he knew were there.

The Delphos Case

On the evening of November 2, 1971, on the Johnson farm located near Delphos, Kansas, an unknown object was reported to have come down almost to ground level and to have then taken off.

It was seen by a young man and later by his parents, and it would simply have gone into the annals of ufology as one of many thousands of landings if it had not been for several secondary effects the objects created: it affected animals; it left peculiar traces on the ground; and, as in the French case of Aveyron, it affected the witness's sleeping pattern.

Here again the young son of the farmer is the main witness. Sixteen-year-old Ronald Johnson was tending the sheep, accompanied by his dog, when the sighting happened. What he suddenly saw was a mushroom-shaped object, illuminated by multicolored lights over its entire surface and hovering twenty-five yards away, within two feet of the ground. Its diameter was about nine feet.

The glow from the object was such that Ronald could see no details, and it was making a sound like "an old washing machine which vibrates." Then it brightened at the base and took off. The witness reportedly became temporarily blind. During all this the dog was "very quiet."

After several minutes, Ronald, regaining his sight, ran into the house to call his

parents, and all came out again to see the object, now high in the sky and over half the full moon in size. It vanished into the distance. The three witnesses went around the house to the site of the near landing and were surprised, they said, to observe a glowing ring on the ground. Parts of nearby trees were also glowing. The texture of the soil, reports an experienced investigator, Mr. Ted Phillips, "felt strange, like a slick crust, as if the soil was crystallized." And Mrs. Johnson noticed that her fingers went numb, as if a local anesthetic had been applied. She is a nurse at a nearby hospital, and for two weeks this condition prevented her from taking the pulse of her patients.

The next day the ring was still clearly visible, with a dry and "crusty" appearance. The inside and the outside of the ring were damp from recent rains, but the ring itself was perfectly dry! Thirty-two days later, when Ted Phillips was able to go to the scene, snow had fallen and was melting both outside and inside the ring, but the one-foot-wide ring was perfectly white.

We removed snow from one section of the ring and introduced water into the exposed ring area: the soil would not permit the water to pass through the surface. This was most remarkable, as there had been several inches of rain and snow.

Phillips removed a sample from the ring and observed that it contained a high concentration of a whitish material. The soil under the ring was dry to a depth of at least one foot.

This is not an isolated occurrence. Hundreds of reports of ring-shaped patterns have been gathered, and many of them refer to a white substance or powder at the site. A similar occurrence took place in New Zealand, at a place named Waihoke, in January 1965. The ring there was visible for four years before it was finally covered with grass. It is curious that in spite of all the excitement caused by the Delphos case and the attention it recieved from "scientific" ufologists and from skeptics, no one, believer or skeptic, ever bothered to identify the white substance itself. Thorough analyses of the soil have been made, however, showing no significant difference between the inside and the outside of the ring. I eventually obtained a sample of the white substance from Mr. Phillips and forwarded it to a biological laboratory in France, where it was examined under a microscope with magnifications ranging from a few diameters to the maximum enlargement possible under the oil immersion

technique. The white substance was resolved into fibers (thus destroying the "explanation" of the case put forth by Philip Klass in his book UFOs Explained, where he claimed the substance was produced by the urine of sheep feeding from a circular device). The fibers were vegetal in nature and belonged to an organism of the order of the Actinomycetales, which is an intermediate organism between bacteria and fungus. (The French biologist who identified it, and who has wished not to be named in this book, determined that the organism belongs to the family of the actinomycete and the genus Nocardia.) It is often found together with a fungus of the order of the Bacidiomycepes, which may fluoresce under certain conditions.

This fungus can cause a circular pattern to be visible on the surface of the ground. This is undoubtedly the explanation for some UFO rings, but the coincidence of this fungus ring with the observation made by the Johnsons remains to be explained. One possible interpretation is that high-energy stimulation triggered the spectacular growth of the Nocardia and of an exiting fungus and caused the latter to fluoresce.

The effects of the glowing object an animals were consistent with other landing cases. During the sighting itself, the dog was very quiet and still. The sheep were bellowing, but like the dog they were almost glued to the spot. The boy could not move either, but it was not clear to him whether this was due to fear or to another cause. The behavior of the animals after the sighting was remarkable. For about two weeks, every evening at sunset, the sheep would jump out of the pen and run wildly. The dog would furiosly try to get into the house at nightfall. He practically destroyed the screen door, and the only way to keep him outside was to replace it with a stronger metal door.

There were striking effects on the witness himself, too. First he suffered from strong eye irritation; his eyes were red and watery. Then came the headaches and the nightmares. These nightmares, lasting about one week, were so vivid that he would wake up his parents with loud screams. He had the same dream, night after night, in which human-like creatures were looking into his window from the outside. Two or three times, when coming into his bedroom, his parents found him screaming, standing by the window.

The Confusion Technique in the Contact Ritual

Earlier I recounted the story of a witness who was asked the time by a UFO occupant. "It is 2:30,"

the witness replied.

"You lie; it is four o'clock," said the occupant.

I am indebted to Gerald Askevold for bringing to my attention a fascinating story by Dr. Milton Erickson, a pioneer in modern hypnosis, concerning "The Gentle Art of Reframing": One windy day... a man came rushing around the corner of a building and bumped hard against me as I stood bracing myself against the wind. Before he could recover his poise to speak to me, I glanced elaborately at my watch and courteously, as if he had inquired the time of day, I stated, "It's exactly ten minutes of two," though it was actually closer to 4 P.M., and walked on. About half a block away, I turned and saw him still looking at me, undoubtedly still puzzled and bewildered by my remark.

After quoting this story, psychologist Paul Watzlawick comments in his book Change: This is how Erickson described the incident that led him to the development of an unusual method of hypnotic induction which he later called the Confusion Technique. What had taken place?

The incident of bumping into each other had created a context in which the obvious conventional response would have been mutual apologies. Dr. Erickson's response suddenly and unexpectedly redefined that same context as a very different one, namely, one that would have been socially appropriate if the other man had asked him the time of day, but even that would have been bewildering because of the patent incorrectness of the information, in contrast to the courteous, solicitous manner in which it was given. The result was confusion, unalleviated by any further information that would have reorganized the pieces of the puzzle into an understandable new frame of reference. As Erickson points out, the need to get out of the confusion by finding this new frame makes the subject particularly ready and eager to hold on firmly to the next piece of concrete information that he is given.

The confusion, setting the stage for reframing, thus becomes an important step in the process of effecting second-order change and of "showing the fly the way out of the fly-bottle."

Was the alleged UFO pilot trying to show the witness the way out of a similar maze? Is this confusion technique deliberately used to effect change on a major scale? Answering such questions could also help us to understand the strong resemblance that anyone who has examined the beliefs of esoteric groups could not fail to note between certain UFO encounters and the initiation rituals of secret societies. This "opening of the mind" to a new set of symbols that is reported by many witnesses is precisely what the various occult traditions also try to achieve.

## The Case of Jose Antonio

A case in point is the story of Jose Antonio, an enlisted Brazilian soldier in the military police of Minas Gerais and orderly to Major Celio Ferreira, who commanded at that time a Guard's Battalion.

An investigation conducted by Mr. Brant Aleixo and published in The Flying Saucer Review (November/December 1973) disclosed that one Sunday afternoon in May 1969, Jose Antonio was fishing on a lagoon north of Belo Horizonte when he suddenly became aware of figures moving behind him. He saw a "burst of light" hit his legs and felt a numbness that caused him to drop his fishing rod and fall to his knees. He was seized by two masked individuals about four feet tall, wearing dull aluminum suits, who took him to a machine that looked like an upright cylinder. Inside this craft the beings gave him a helmet similar to their own, tied him up, and took off: The higher the machine seemed to rise, the more difficult did breathing seem for the soldier, and at one stage, in addition to his state of low morale, he felt as though his whole body was physically tired out, almost paralyzed. He felt more and more uncomfortable in this position, owing to the hardness and the shape of the seat, the numbness in his legs, and the weight of the helmet, the corners of which were bruising his shoulders and neck.

After a period of travel that seemed "interminable," the machine landed with a jarring sensation, and the little men unfastened Jose Antonio. They put a bandage over the eyeholes in his helmet and carried him with his knees dragging on the ground. He heard footsteps and the sound of many people talking. Finally he was placed on a backless seat and the bandage was removed.

Jose Antonio found himself in a large quadrangular room, thirty by forty feet, about fifteen feet away from a robust dwarf who stared at him "with apparent satisfaction." The dwarf was extremely hairy:

His long tresses, reddish and wavy, fell down behind past his shoulders to his waist; his beard was long and thick and came down to his stomach. He had wide-set eyebrows, two fingers thick, running right across the whole forehead. His skin was light-colored, very pale.

His eyes were round, larger than is the norm with us, and of a green shade like the color of green leaves beginning to wither.

Other beings of similar appearance began arriving until about fifteen dwarfs were in the room. The soldier assumed there was a door in the back beyond his field of vision. The three walls he could see had no window and no door. To his left was a low shelf with the corpses of four men, one of them a Negro. He thought they had been killed by the homunculi. The whole room seemed to be made of stone, and at one point Jose Antonio was given something to drink out of a cubical stone glass, and the cavity containing a dark green liquid was in the shape of an inverted pyramid.

The lighting in the room was uniform and instensely bright and from no identifiable source. On the left wall were paintings of animals: a jaguar, a monkey, a giraffe, an elephant; also vehicles, houses.

In the far right angle of the room was something that looked like an upside-down racing car. He watched while the homunculi examined all his fishing equipment and carefully took one of every item in duplicate: they kept one specimen of each type of fishing hook and a single banknote from a total of 35,000 old cruzeiros.

The leader of the dwarfs began a strange conversation with the soldier. It was conducted entirely through gestures and drawings and revolved around the concept of weapons. (Jose Antonio thinks that they must have percieved that he was in the military and illustrated this by their actions.) At one time, a little man shot a beam of light against the stone wall. The communication seemed to be a request that Jose Antonio help the little beings in their relations with earth. Was he to be their guide among men? This is what Jose Antonio

understood. He gestured his refusal and began praying, fingering the rosary he always carried with him:

The leader stepped towards him and, displaying irritation for the first time, seized the crucifix and snatched it from him. One of the beads rolled onto the floor and was picked up by one of the little men, who showed it to the others. The crucifix was passed around in the same way, arousing the curiosity of all of them.

While this discussion took place among the homunculi Jose Antonio had a vision of a Christ-like entity, "his eyes clear and serene," barefoot and wearing a dark robe. The figure made some revelations to Jose Antonio, who now refuses to disclose them. The apparition vanished, the irritated dwarfs blindfolded him again, and he was transported back. As the machine landed, he felt that he was being dragged and he lost consciousness. He woke up alone near the town of Vitoria in the state of Espirito Santo, two hundred miles away from the spot where he had been fishing. He had been away for four and a half days.

There is a curious parallel to this case in the experiences of Robert Monroe, whose investigations of "out-of-body" travel have already been mentioned. On a particular occasion he had the feeling of being outside his body, fighting with two small beings: Desperate for a solution, I thought about fire and this seemed to help a little. However, I got the impression that they were both amused, as if there was nothing I could do to harm them.

By this time I was sobbing for help.

Then I saw someone else coming up out of the corner of my eye. I first thought it was another one, but this was very definitely a man. He simply stopped a short distance away and watched what was taking place with a very serious expression on his face.... He wore a dark robe down to his ankles. I could not see his feet.

As in the case of Jose Antonio, the apparition of the taller man was the signal for the end of the ordeal.

Initiation rituals are characterized by the following phases or general scenes,

often combined or developed into complex themes:

1. The candidate is confronted by members of the occult group wearing a special costume.

2. He is blindfolded.

3. He is led by the arm through a rough and difficult route.

4. He is taken into a specially designed chamber with no windows and is placed in such a way that he can only see part of it.

5. He is brought in the presence of a "Master."

6. He is given a test and made to answer questions.

7. He is shown a variety of symbols designed to remind him of death.

8. The situation suggests that he may not survive the ordeal.

9. He is given ritual food or drink.

10. He is blindfolded again and led outside.

All of these elements are present in the case of Jose Antonio. To this we must add that everything in the room appeared to be made out of stone. The drinking cube with the inverted pyramid cavity is an exquisite last touch.

The Case of Paulo Gaetano

Another remarkable case from South America will close this chapter, raising further possibilities for the nature of confrontation.

On November 17, 1971, at 9:30 P.M., a Brazilian man named Paulo Gaetano was driving back from the town of Natividad de Carangola on a business trip. With him in the car was another man, Mr. Elvio B. As they passed the town of Bananeiras, Paulo felt the car was not pulling normally, and he mentioned this to his companion, who reacted by saying only that he was tired and wanted to sleep.

The engine stalled and Paulo had to stop the car on the side of the road. He then saw an object about twelve feet away. A red beam of light was projected at the car and seemed to cause the door to open.

Several small beings appeared, took Paulo into the craft, and made him lie down on a small table.

Fastening his arms, they lowered from the ceiling an apparatus that resembled an x-ray machine. He felt a cut near his elbow, and the beings collected his blood. (Investigators from the SBEVD research group in Brazil saw and photographed the wound three days later.) Then he was shown two panels, one of them a plan of the town of Itaperuna, the other a picture of an atomic explosion.

Paulo felt heavy. He remembers being helped by Elvio, but does not recall how they got back home.

The interesting point is that the witness was not alone. Did Elvio also see the flying saucer? No. He only saw a bus:

Near Bananeiras, Paulo had begun to show signs of nervousness, Elvio reported. He told him that there was a flying saucer accompanying them, when in fact what was following them was a bus which was keeping at a reasonable distance behind the car.

Elvio added that the car had slowed down and stopped, and that he had come to the assistance of Paulo after he had fallen to the ground, behind the car, with the door on the driver's side remaining open. Elvio managed to get Paulo on his feet and started with him by bus toward Itaperuna, where Paulo was examined by the first-aid station. The police sent a patrol to the site and found Paulo's car on the highway. Elvio was unable to explain what had happened to Paulo and why the door was open. He did not remember when Paulo had gotten out. And he could not explain why they had taken the bus. The police found no trace on the car that could explain the wound on Paulo's arm.

Some experiments with microwaves suggest that it is becoming technically feasible for sensory impressions to be projected into people's minds at a distance. Is this part of the technology that is involved in the UFO

phenomenon? Here again we must ask: are we dealing with a technology that systematically confuses the witnesses? If so, it must be possible to duplicate it. If certain areas of the human brain can be remotedly stimulated, then it is not impossible to think of broadcasts literally saturating large territories with a flood of symbols. Such a technology could be an important factor in the confrontation with advanced psychotronic devices.

## 7. The Spiritual Component: A Morphology of Miracles

What Happened at Fatima

Many descriptions of UFO phenomena force us to deal simultaneously with two categories we always attempt to separate: the physical (or technical) and the spiritual (or divine). Numerous witnesses, in their statements after a close encounter, claim bluntly that the experience of the phenomenon has a religious meaning to them. Perhaps it does. Perhaps we need not only a scientific breakthrough here but a consciousness breakthrough as well, a global, historical grasp of the beliefs – materialistic as well as idealistic – among which we have been groping for ten thousand years.

Steven Spielberg capitalized on this idea at the end of the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind. So did Whitley Strieber in his book Communion. But it has been captured in the most complete and most artistic form in John Fowle's extraordinary masterpiece, A Maggot, published in 1986.

The famous apparitions at Fatima offer a historical example of the religious dimension of UFO encounters. The case is a celebrated one, yet I am prepared to wager that few Americans know the full story of what happened in 1917 near that small Portuguese town. I suspect that even fewer realize that the entire sequence of observations of an entity thought to be the Virgin Mary had begun two years previously with a fairly classical sequence of UFO sightings.

If we accept the interpretation given of Fatima by the Catholic Church, we are dealing with a phenomenon that cannot be explained either as a physical effect or as an illusion. In its decision of 1930, arrived at after thirteen years of painstaking investigations by many scholars, the church states that:

The solar phenomenon of the 13th of October 1917, described in the press of the time, was most marvelous and caused the greatest impression on those who had the happiness of witnessing it....

This phenomenon, which no astronomical observatory registered and which therefore was not natural, was witnessed by persons of all categories and of all social classes, believers and unbelievers, journalists of the principal

Portuguese newspapers and even by persons some miles away. Facts which annul any explanation of collective illusion.

This "miracle," the reader will note, had been predicted several months before by three illiterate children after their vision of a woman "in a bright glow." She had not said that she was the Virgin Mary. She had simply stated that she was "from Heaven" and instructed them to return every month until October, when a public miracle would take place "so that everyone may believe."

The events at Fatima involve luminous spheres, lights with strange colors, a feeling of "heat waves" – all physical characteristics commonly associated with UFOs. They even include the typical falling-leaf motion of the saucer zigzagging through the air. They also encompass prophecy and a loss of ordinary consciousness on the part of witnesses – what we have called the psychic component of UFO sightings.

The Pattern of Prophecy

The first apparition at Fatima of the woman took place on May 13, 1917. Three children were watching their sheep when a bright flash surprised them, and they walked toward the large hollow pasture called Cova da Iria (literally: the Cave of St. Irene, an old sacred spot) to see what had happened. They found themselves caught in a glowing light that almost blinded them, and in the center of the light they percieved a little woman, who spoke to them, begging them to return every month to the same spot.

While the children had been alone on the first occasion, there were fifty people the second time, on June 13. They watched while the little shepherds knelt and became transfigured, as if transported into another world, at the time of the observation. The oldest child, Lucia, who was ten at the time, addressed an unseen entity whose answers were not heard by others in the group. One spectator, however, reported perceiving a very faint voice or the buzzing of a bee (a typical sound associated with modern-day UFOs). At the end of the dialogue all witnesses heard an explosion and saw a small cloud rise from the vicinity of a tree – on which all the succeeding manifestations would center.

The following month, on July 13, the number of witnesses rose to forty-five hundred. This third apparition was especially remarkable in several respects.

It included detailed descriptions by some of the spectators of physical phenomena that are specific enough to be compared to UFO data. In the words of Joseph Pelletier, in The Sun Danced at Fatima: A buzzing or humming sound, a decrease in the Sun's glow and heat, a small whitish cloud about the three of the apparitions, and a loud noise at the Lady's departure.

It is also remarkable that the children were shown a vision of hell that terrified them and were given a specific prophecy announcing more apparitions of unknown lights in the sky: The war is going to end, but if people do not stop offending God another and worse one will begin during the reign of Pius XI [note: he died in 1939]. When you see a night illuminated by an unknown light know that this is the great sign that God is giving you that he is going to punish the world for its crimes by means of war, famine, and persecution of the Church and of the Holy Father.

To prevent this I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia.... If they heed my request, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not, she will spread her errors throughout the world.

The mixture of seriousness and absurdity that we have already noted in several contactee stories is an unmistakable characteristic of this statement. We will find the same thing to be true in Lourdes, where the alleged Virgin Mary instructs the little Bernadette to perform meaningless actions.

The pattern of prophecy followed its course. On August 13 eighteen thousand people were at the site of the apparitions. The children, however, were not present. They had been kidnapped and jailed by a local official who had decided to put an end to this "nonsense." In their absence, a clap of thunder was heard, followed by a bright flash. A small whitish cloud was forming around the tree. It hovered for a few minutes, then rose and melted away. The clouds in the sky had turned crimson red, and then changed to pink, yellow, and blue. "Colored light like a rainbow on the ground"; "clouds around the sun reflecting different colors on the people" – such are some of the terms the witnesses used to describe it. The witnesses saw "falling flowers," the famous phenomenon of "angel hair" so consistently reported after the passage of a UFO, and sometimes interpreted as an ionization effect. One man, Manuel Pedro Marto, in a statement made under oath during the canonical inquiry, reported seeing clearly a luminous globe spinning through the clouds.

On August 19 the children had been released and were tending sheep near Aljustrel when, about 4:00 P.M., they noticed a sudden lowering of the temperature. The sun, they said, became yellowish; the colors of the rainbow once again filled the countryside, visible to adults in the vicinity (as was later established). The bright flash was seen, and a glowing light came to settle about a tree near the children. The entity, clothed in white and gold, stood once more in the center of the glow. The witnesses fell on their knees and "feasted their souls in rapture." A dialogue followed in which the apparition asked the children to "make sacrifices for sinners." After ten minutes the Lady of Light departed slowly toward the east with a roaring sound.

Apparitions of a Flying Globe

On September 13 the crowd numbered thirty thousand, including two priests who were absolutely skeptical and had come specifically to establish the falsity of the much-heralded "miracles." The site of the apparitions was a wide amphitheater where most of the crowd had gathered to be close to the tree of the apparitions. However, the two skeptical priests had chosen a spot on the higher ground from which they could observe everything. The following is based on their report.

Noon. The sun got dimmer, although no clouds were seen in the sky. Thousands cried: "There she is... look!" A globe of light was seen by all, advancing slowly down the valley, from east to west, toward the children. It came to rest on the tree. A white cloud formed and, out of the empty sky, shiny white "petals" began to fall. Let us ponder this description of the phenomenon by a witness: As the people stare at this strange sight they soon notice that the falling, glistering globules, contrary to the laws of perspective, grow smaller and smaller as they near them. And when they reach out their hands and hats to catch them they find that they have somehow melted away.

The children saw the entity again in the center of the globe, and the dialogue began once more between the Lady and Lucia. The promise of a miracle on October 13 was repeated. Then the radiant globe rose and disappeared into the sun.

Asked what he thought the globe was, one of the priests, now quite shaken, stated that "it was a heavenly vehicle that carried the Mother of God from her

throne above to this forbidden wasteland." The concept of the earth as a prison or forbidden wasteland is a popular one among those who have been exposed to these phenomena.

The last apparition, as predicted, took place on October 13, 1917. The crowd numbered seventy thousand this time. (The size of the assembled crowd had grown in the following progression: 3, 50, 4,500, 18,000, 30,000, 70,000.) The vision was preceded by a flash of light at noon and a sweet strange fragnance. The children engaged in a dialogue with the Lady. Witnesses did observe the dramatic change on the faces of the three children, enraptured by the vision.

The predicted miracle took place as the apparition left the Cova da Iria. The rain that had been pouring down on the crowd suddenly stopped, and the heavy clouds parted. The sun appeared as a disk of brilliant silver, "a weird disk that turns rapidly on its own axis and casts off beams of colored lights in all directions. Shafts of red light shot out from the rim of the sun and colored the clouds, the earth, the trees, the people; then shafts of violet, of blue, of yellow and of other colors followed in succession." These colors have been described by an objective skeptic as "monochromatic sectors," and they were definitely revolving.

The reports speak of a flat disk rather than a globe. After a while it stopped spinning and "plunged downward in zig-zag fashion toward the earth and the horrified spectators."

Most witnesses believed their last hour had come. Many of them, including the debunkers, knelt in the mud and began publicly confessing their sins. Finally the disk reversed its motion and disappeared into the sun, the real sun, once again fixed and dazzling in the sky. The astounded crowd suddenly realized that their clothes were dry.

Such is the story of Fatima as it can be reconstructed from reports of the time and from church investigations. The final "miracle" had come at the culmination of a precise series of apparitions combined with contacts and messages that place it very clearly, in my opinion, in the perspective of UFO phenomena. Not only was a flying disk or globe consistently involved, but its motion, its falling-leaf trajectory, its light effects, the thunderclaps, the buzzing

sounds, the strange fragrance, the fall of "angel hair" that dissolves upon reaching the ground, the heat wave associated with the close approach of the disk – all of these are frequent parameters of UFO sightings everywhere. And so are the paralysis, the amnesia, the conversations, and the healings.

## The Angel of Peace

Few of the books on Fatima provide us with details of the children's background. Yet in all apparition phenomena, it is crucial to investigate this background thoroughly and to ask as precisely as possible for descriptions of the earliest incidents that set the witness on a path to extraordinary realities. In the case of Fatima the events did not begin – as most authorities indicate – on May 13, 1917. It is true that such is the date of the first apparition of the Lady, but this had been preceded by a series of sightings of an angel a couple of years before. These sightings cast serious doubts on the interpretation of the "miracle" given by the Catholic Church.

In April 1915, when Lucia was eight, she was reciting the rosary near Fatima when she saw a transparent white cloud and a human form. This happened a second time in the same year, and a third time in October. Then, during 1916, Lucia was visited three times by the angel.

The first occasion was in the spring. Lucia was with two of her cousins when rain started to fall.

The children sought shelter in a small cave. After lunch the rain had stopped, and they were playing at the entrance of the cave when they heard the rumble of a powerful wind – another constant in UFO behavior – and a white light appeared. It was gliding through the valley above the tree tops. In the light was a youth of admirable beauty who came close to them and said, "I am the Angel of Peace." He taught the children a prayer and disappeared. The three little ones were left in a trance: they kept repeating and repeating the prayer, mechanically, until they literally fell from exhaustion.

The next incident took place on a hot day in midsummer 1916. This time, the angel appeared suddenly and asked, "What are you doing? Pray! Pray a great deal! Offer prayers and sacrifices continually."

"How are we to offer sacrifices?" asked Lucia.

"Make a sacrifice of everything that you possibly can.... Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering that the Lord shall send you."

The children were left paralyzed. It was only toward the evening that they regained their senses and began to play again. In this case, as in the previous one, the witnesses did not want to discuss the matter – not even among themselves. Pelletier reports that: The experience has been so intimate and so manifestly sacred that none of them ever thinks of revealing it, or even the smallest part of it, to anyone else. It is obviously a favor to be kept for themselves. Of that they are absolutely and instinctively persuaded.

The next day they still could not explain their reactions to the apparitions: "I don't know what is happening to me," said one of the little girls. "I cannot speak, nor play, not sing, and I haven't the strenght to do anything."

The angel appeared one more time, in the fall of 1916, in the cave at Cabeso. He gave the children Communion. Analyzing the power that prompted the young witnesses to imitate the actions of this "angels" and to repeat his prayers slavishly, Pelletier offers this perceptive remark: This power is so intense that it absorbs and almost completely annihilates them. It practically deprives them of the use of their bodily senses... their bodies are subject to a mysterious, depressing force that prostrates them.

His remark could apply to the entire spectrum of close encounters with UFOs.

The Impact of Fatima

What were the sequels to the Fatima story? The lives of many people who attended the "miracles" were deeply changed. Some were cured of a variety of diseases.

At my mother's request, I went once more to Cova da Iria in August at the time of the apparitions, writes engineer Mario Godinho. Once more I came back discouraged and disappointed. But that time, something extraordinary happened. My mother, who had had a large tumor in one of her eyes for many years, was cured. The doctors who had attended her said they could not

explain such a cure.

This is just one among hundreds of such testimonies. At the time of the final miracle, many people were driven out of their senses, even those who saw it from a distance of several miles and were not in the company of other witnesses who might have influenced them. A child of twelve, named Albano Barros, for example, who was in a field near Minde, eight miles from Fatima, was so struck when he saw the disk of light falling toward the earth that he does not remember what followed: "I cannot even remember whether I took the sheep home, whether I ran, or what I did." Others were so afflicted that, like farmer Manuel Francisco, they went home weeping. Another witness, a lady who now lives in the United States, near Albany, added this comment, "Even today, whenever there is lightning, I remember it, and I am afraid." A prominent lawyer, Mr. Mendes, stated in an interview with John Haffert in 1960:

What I saw at Fatima could not help but affect the interior life and I am sure that all who saw the miracle, or even heard about it, cannot fail to be impressed by its greatness.... I still remember it today as vividly as at the moment it happened, and I feel myself to be dominated by that extraordinary event.

Another witness reports: "I always keep thinking about the sign." An extremely interesting series of testimonies came from witnesses who were not at Cova da Iria, but miles away from the crowd. I have already mentioned the observation made by Albano Barros in Minde. A woman named Mrs. Guilhermina Lopes da Silva, who lived in Leiria no less than sixteen miles from the site of the miracle, could not go to the place appointed for the apparition, but she looked toward the mountain at noon and saw "a great red flash" in the sky. The brilliance was such that it was seen thirty miles away (at San Pedro de Muel, by Portuguese writer Afonso Vieira, his wife, and his mother-in-law).

The phenomenon, it seems, could not be photographed directly with the emulsions and shutter speeds commonly aviable at the time. (One picture often produced by the newspapers and alleged to show the miracle is in fact a photograph of an eclipse of the sun that has nothing to do with it.) There are many pictures of the crowd during the "miracle," however, and the actual brightness of the disk is an unresolved question. Two witnesses looked at it

with binoculars and reported seeing a ladder and two beings. The edges of the disk, according to all descriptions, were sharp. And it was definitely not blinding, although pictures of the crowd show many witnesses shading their eyes. But others report that the phenomenon darkened the sun to such an extent that at one point they could see the moon and the stars.

Another remote witness was a schoolboy who was so impressed by what he saw that he subsequently became a priest. An American Catholic writer named John Haffert interviewed him in 1960. At the time of the miracle the schoolboy was with his brother and other children in the village of Alburitel, nine miles away from the Cova da Iria, and here is what he experienced: I looked fixedly at the sun which seemed pale and did not hurt my eyes. Looking like a ball of snow, revolving on itself, it suddenly seemed to come down in a zig-zag, menacing the earth. Terrified, I ran and hid myself among the people, who were weeping and expecting the end of the world at any moment. It was a crowd which had gathered outside our local village school and we had all left classes and run into the streets because of the cries and surprised shouts of men and women who were in the street in front of the school when the miracle began.

There was an unbeliever there who had spent the morning mocking the "simpletons" who had gone off to Fatima just to see an ordinary girl. He now seemed paralyzed, his eyes fixed on the sun. He began to tremble from head to foot, and lifting up his arms, fell on his knees in the mud, crying out to God.

But meanwhile the people continued to cry out and to weep, asking God to pardon their sins.

We all ran to the two chapels in the village, which were soon filled to overflowing. During those long moments of the solar prodigy, objects around us turned all colors of the rainbow.... When the people realized that the danger was over, there was an explosion of joy.

Two of the three children at Fatima died young, as the Lady had predicted, but Lucia lived secluded in a convent to an advanced age.

The Physics of the B.V.M.

We have just examined one series of apparently miraculous events, namely

those related to the Fatima observations of the entity described by percipients as the Blessed Virgin Mary. These percipients, of course, have been exposed to such a powerful alteration of reality that their statements, from the observation on, are distorted by their emotions. This does not mean we should reject their testimony. It is consistent with many other reports.

On February 11, 1858, a fourteen-year-old girl named Bernadette Soubirous was gathering firewood by a narrow stream near Lourde, in the south of France, when she heard "a great noise, like the sound of a storm." She looked around her but neither the trees or the water was disturbed. Then she heard the sound again. In fear, she looked straight up and "lost all power of speech and thought."

From a nearby cave or grotto came a golden-colored cloud. Soon after came an entity, described as a beautiful lady, who placed herself above a bush that was moving as if it were windy. At Fatima, there was a wind which "moved across the mountain without touching the trees." The Lady of Fatima consistently appeared in the top branches of a small tree, whose center shoots were found bent toward the east, as though tilted in that direction when the apparition departed. Lucia, of Fatima, was closely questioned on this point and stated that "our Lady's feet rested lightly on the top of the leaves." Montes de Oca adds in his book More About Fatima that "the topmost branches of the tree were bent in the form of a parasol and remained thus as if an invisible weight had come to rest upon them."

When the Lady of Lourdes looked at Bernadette, all fear left the girl, but she seemed to no longer know where she was. She wanted to pray but as she tried to lift her hand to her forehead her arm remained paralyzed, and it is only after the Lady had crossed herself that Bernadette could do the same. When the story became known it was met with incredulity by the local authorities and by the prisets. Father Peyramalle, who was the curé of the town, was especially angry and suggested that the Lady should make the rosebush bloom before the whole crowd in order to convince everyone.

When Bernadette conveyed to the Lady this demand on the part of the local priest, the apparition simply smiled. For fifteen days she appeared to Bernadette, and their conversations centered on the Lady's request for a chapel and for processions there. At times the dialogue was totally absurd, and it was

absurd in the same sense as the conversations with "ufonauts" we have reviewed. On one occasion, the Lady told Bernadette to go and wash herself in a nonexistent spring, and in another she ordered her bluntly to "go and eat the grass that grows over there!"

A study of these events from the point of view of the esoteric tradition might be rewarding. Occult masters like Gurdjieff and Crowley were wont to send their disciples on insane errands such as carrying stones to a mountain top as a test of their devotion or as a discipline conducive to a spiritual awakening. The early story of Mary herself, and the miracles that surrounds her life, point to intriguing similarities with earlier deities, and in particular with the Egyptian goddess Isis. Like many targets of UFO manifestations, Mary was hit by a mysterious beam of light and subsequently bore a fatherless child. The scene at Fatima is reminiscent of the Phoenician amulets described earlier. However, we are not concerned here with an interpretation of mythology but with an attempt to deal with reports of observations that seem to form extraordinary patterns. One such pattern is that of the cloud and the cave, a common thread between Fatima, Lourdes, and other apparitions. In the Apocrypha we find the same pattern:

They stood in the place of the cave: And behold a bright cloud overshadowing the cave. And the midwife said: My soul is magnified this day, because mine eyes have seen marvelous things: for salvation is born unto Israel. And immediately the cloud withdrew itself out of the cave, and great light appeared in the cave so that our eyes could not endure it. And by little and little that light withdrew itself until the young child appeared.

A superficial examination of the phenomena of Lourdes would seem to indicate that a rather simple firl (Bernadette was illiterate and spent most of her day repeating prayers while accomplishing some menial chores for her very poor parents) simply turned into a visionary and soon shared her insanity with increasingly large crowds. But the story deserves closer examination.

First, there is the matter of the spring. During the ninth apparition of the Lady, Bernadette was instructed to "go and wash and drink in the spring" – but there was no spring! Bernadette looked for a spring, found none, and in despair began to dig into the sand. Water appeared and filled the hole, turning the soil to mud. Bernadette tried to wash and only managed to smear her face with the

mud.

The crowd laughed at her, especially when she attempted to drink and later to eat the grass.

Bernadette had dug the hole "in a sort of stupor" but seems to have done so at just the right time and place for a spring to appear. Indeed, the next day there was a clean little stream at the spot. A blind man named Louis Bourriette bathed his eyes in the spring and regained his sight. A dying baby was said to be restored to full health. The attitude of the crowd changed.

The next phase of the apparitions was marked by a request for penance. Bernadette was instructed to "kiss the ground for sinners." The girl, and all those in attendance, began kissing the ground as a gesture of humility. The gesture is indeed a moving one. It is even interpreted by some as a sweeping social panacea, as, for example, Stephen Breen says: They were setting an example of prayer and humility which could save Europe if applied to the social problems of the time, which, after all, are only a collection of personal problems, in the final analysis.

Many of us will disagree with this rather simplistic and superficial view of social problems, but the point made here is the illustration of a mechanism through which phenomena such as UFO sightings and contacts with paranormal entities can play a role far beyond their local impact. For France at the end of the nineteenth century, as for Portugal in 1917, the apparitions of the mysterious Lady were in many respects social and political turning points, deeply influencing the collective psyche.

Another interesting observation concerns the nature of the state of trance experienced by Bernadette. One doctor had decided to expose her as a mental case and performed a fascinating experiment. This man, Dr. Douzous, witnessed a cnadle flame applied to Bernadette's hand for fifteen minutes, measured by his watch. When she finished her prayers he could observe the glow of ecstasy leaving her face.

I asked her to show me her left hand. I examined it most carefully, but could not find the least trace of burning anywhere on it. I then asked the person who was holding the candle to light it again and give it to me. I put it several times in

succession under Bernadette's left hand but she drew it away quickly, saying, "You're burning me." I record this fact just as I have seen it without attempting to explain it.

Shining Beings

Evans-Wentz, who knew equally well the traditions of Tibet and those of Scotland, was one of the greatest students of folklore in this century. After all his life travels he came to California and spent his last years near San Diego, where he befriended the local Indians and diligently studied their culture and traditions. He made some interesting discoveries in California and left many notes in manuscript form. They contain interesting ideas on the relationship between religion and paranormal phenomena.

The most interesting theory put forth by Evans-Wentz is a further development of the observation that ancient gods are continued under new names as myths evolve from civilization to civilization.

Could it be, he asked, that every land has its own psychic and telluric forces, contributing to the appearance of certain spirit entities, regarded by human beings as gods and goddesses? Could the parallelism between Mormonism and ancient Indian beliefs be an example of such a process?

Frank Waters had pointed out before Evans-Wentz that the early white settlers in America had become very closely Indian in spirit and feeling. He writes in Masked Gods: They had confronted here that great psychic entity which was the spirit-of-place, the heart of a new continent. It shattered them completely. But each succumbed in a different way.

The vision of God and Jesus experienced by Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Latter-Day Saints, was in fact, Evans-Wentz believes, a vision of the Shining Beings (known in other parts of the world as Devas). These Shining Beings appeared to Indians during secret rituals performed on high places or sacred mountains. Thus, the Winnebagos tell of a youth who climbed the mountain, eager to find wisdom. He fasted for twelve days, and a spirit came to him, giving him knowledge and teaching him wonderful words that brought health, welfare, and long life. He came back to his people with a song expressing this newly discovered wisdom, and the song began: In to solitude

went I

And wisdom was revealed to me.

Saith the Spirit,

Dream, oh, dream again,

And tell of me,

Dream thou!

Such a vision-quest is universal among the Indians of America, although among some tribes (such as the Pueblos and Navahos) it is limited to the priests and initiates. To Evans-Wentz, the beings contacted in the course of such visions are identical with the Celtic creatures of the Secret Commonwealth, and he concludes that there is evidence for their true existence. These beings are the guardians of secret places, "holding them in trust for a future of wonders." Evans-Wentz had been told by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats that such places existed and were thus guarded. He identifies one such spot in France, one in County Wicklow (Ireland), one in Campagna (Italy), and others in Asia and America.

Can we then use the vast and untapped reservoir of fantastic events in the collections of UFO lore to force an answer from our gods old and new, to bring them down to a human dimension, or to understand their power? Or do we find ourselves locked in their maze, their "fly bottle?" Is the time of our inquiry always wrong, the place always elsewhere? Are the angels in heaven rejoicing, or do they laugh at our stupidity?

A former Jesuit priest, Father Salvatore Freixedo, has deeply researched this aspect of the phenomenon in several books like Defendiamonos de los Dioses ( In Defense Against the Gods) that are not yet aviable in English, unfortunately. He argues convincingly that the spiritual control system of which UFOs are a part may have resulted in the religious myths that keep mankind in a state of abject submission to obsolete myths. In our private conversations, he implied that the phenomenon originates with entities that manipulate our reality and our destiny for their own purposes. Using our naïveté and our lack of

critical judgement in the presence of "miracles," these entities, in his view, play with our emotions in order to be worshipped as gods.

The Mormon Story

I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor....

He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds and tongues.

Thus begins the account of the revelation of the Book of Mormon with the story of what transpired on the night of September 21, 1823, between Joseph Smith and an angel. The book itself, the angel stated, was in the form of gold plates that lay buried at a certain spot and could be translated with the help of two stones in silver containers that were buried with the plates.

After this communication, I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around the person of him who had been speaking to me, and it continued to do so, until the room was again left dark, except just around him, when instantly I saw, as it were, a conduit open right up into heaven, and he ascended until he entirely disappeared.

In 1842, at the request of Colonel Wentworth of the Chicago Democrat, Joseph Smith wrote a sketch of the history of the Mormon Church that contained additional details on the apparition: On a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room; indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire. The appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body. In a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that by which I was already surrounded....

I was told where there were deposited some plates, on which was engraved an abridgment of the records of the ancient peoples that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded

the same things.

It is important to note that this apparition was not Joseph's first vision. Indeed, he had "been forbidden to join any of the religious sects of the day" because he had claimed to have been favored by a mystical revelation while he was alone in the wilderness at the age of fourteen.

When Angel Moroni appeared to him Joseph Smith had been praying for a vision, for, he says, "I had full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation, as I had previously had one." The angel appeared three times during the night of September 21, 1823 (which happens to be the autumnal equinox), repeating exactly the same words. After the third time Joseph was surprised to hear the cock crow and to find that daylight was approaching, "so that our interviews must have occupied the whole of that night."

Joseph Smith got up and began his normal chores, but he found himself so exhausted (like the children at Fatima) that he couldn't work in any useful way. His father thought he was sick and told him to go home. On the way he fell when trying to climb a fence and remained unconscious. The angel then appeared to him once more and told him to repeat his words to his father and to reveal his instructions. The father told Joseph to go and do as he had been commanded and said that "these things were of God."

Thus, the young man was allowed to go to the place where the plates were buried. He found them inside a stone box, which he had no difficulty opening, but he was unable to take the plates out of the box. Again the angel appeared, and it told him to come back precisely in one year and every year after that; four years later he would be permitted to take the plates.

The remainder of the story is well known. Thanks to the help of a wealthy farmer named Martin Harris, Smith was able to work on the translation of the golden plates, which he read with the help of special stones he had found in the box. When Harris took the plates and the beginning of the translation to Professor Charles Anthony of New York, this learned gentleman stated that the translation was correct, "more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian."

Looking at the plates that had not yet been translated, he said that they were

Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, and Arabic, and the professor signed a statement to that effect, which he later tore to pieces, however, when he learned that the young man had found the plates upon the instruction of an angel!

Eleven persons have stated that they saw the plates unearthed by Joseph Smith. In June 1829, in response to a communication obtained by Smith, the Mormon prophet retired to the woods accompanied by Martin Harris, David Whitmer, and Oliver Cowdery, and knelt "in fervent prayer," hoping to recieve a vision of the plates. As nothing happened, Martin Harris withdrew from the group, believing that it was his presence that prevented the miracle from taking place. The others resumed their prayers and, after a few minutes, an angel stood before them, holding the plates: "He turned over the leaves one by one, so that we could see them and discern the engravings thereon distinctly."

The Book of Mormon was first published in 1830. It is a strange document, similar in many ways to the Oahspe bible or the Book of Urantia, two accounts of early history similarly "inspired" by divine intelligence. The Oahspe bible is an account of the origins and antiquity of mankind and contains many references to the Red Men. It was recieved "psychically" by John Ballou Newbrough about 1881, and it originated with Shining Beings whom he called angels.

It is futile to engage in a debate concerning the truth or falsity of the statements made by Joseph Smith. We are looking here for indications of a higher order, and we can define as a miracle any event, real or imagined or even faked, which creates certain paranormal but verifiable effects. The transformation of an ordinary farmboy from rural New York State into an unchallenged leader of multitudes is an unusual fact that deserves attention even if we doubt the story. When we trace the turning point of this man's life to the sighting of a strange light and to contact with an entity inside the light, I believe the account needs to be preserved along with those we have already found in other faiths and other lands.

Evans-Wentz was intrigued by Joseph Smith's very first vision, which was not an apparition of Angel Moroni but of two entities whose names he was not privileged to learn. This took place as the fourteen-year-old Smith was praying in a wood, as related in the book The Pearl of Great Price: I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended

gradually until it fell upon me.... When the light rested on me I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all descriptions, standing above me in the air.

One of them spake unto me.

As the translator of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, Evans-Wentz recognized that the role played by Smith in bringing out the Book of Mormon was similar to that of the Tertons, the "takers-out" of secreted scriptures in Tibet. However, the Book of Mormon claims to be the "sacred history of ancient America." It states that the Indians are the remnant of an Israelite tribe that settled in America six hundred years before Christ. This is a difficult statement to take seriously in the light of modern anthropology. Thus we are again confronted with a mixture of certainty and absurdity, of fact and fantasy. Were such messages deliberately given to isolate the believers from the society around them?

In an article published in the April 1974 issue of Occult magazine, Jerome Clark and Loren Coleman point out that the history of Mormonism also contains many references to three mysteious beings said to be three of Christ's American Apostles, who asked to be allowed to remain on earth until his Second Coming. The three "Nephites" have been seen several times since the days of Joseph Smith and form an interesting and colorful counterpart to the Three Men in Black of modern UFO lore. These Nephites are sometimes seen singly, and they perform miracles and healings. In one of the stories quoted by Clark and Coleman, a Utah woman named Squires, who was expecting the return of her husband and had seen no one around her house while drawing water from the well a minute before, suddenly found herself confronted with a gray-haired man wearing a long white beard, who requested something to eat and soon remarked that "she was not well." When she acknowledged that indeed she was suffering from a pain under her shoulder, the unknown man replied: "God bless you, Sister. You will never want for anything again. You will always be blessed with plenty." He walked out the door, but when Mrs. Squires followed him outside he had vanished, and she could not see where he had gone. The date of the incident is given as the summer of 1874.

Her health and money problems disappeared soon after, and she lived to the age of eighty-nine.

A Unified Theory of Apparitions

In many UFO stories of the olden days, the witnesses thought they had seen angels from God and for this reason never bothered to report their experiences. Others thought they had seen devils. The difference may be small. Commenting on the childhood experiences of Edgar Cayce and Uri Geller, a British researcher named Peter Rogerson has reminded me that similar stories were common in accounts of mediums of various kinds. He wrote to me that: Andrew Jackson Davis, "The Poughkeepsie Seer," claimed to have met a mystical personage who gave him a staff in which there were little boxes which gave "cures to various diseases." The account follows the classical pattern of the evolution of the shaman. Mircea Eliade in his book Shamanism records the words of various shamans and how they became aware of the shamanistic powers. Accounts are often of the nature "I was washing by the river when a great ball of fire came down from the sky, it entered me, then I knew I was to become a shaman."

Since the publication of my earlier books, I have recieved many interesting letters along similar lines. "Until now I thought I had seen a messenger from Heaven," writes one witness. "I understand, having read your book, that I had witnessed a UFO." Some of the stories are strange yet consistent enough to become the nucleus of a new religious movement if the witness were of the proper psychological inclination. Perhaps only one close encounter in ten thousand starts a new faith, a new sect, or a new belief. When the right combination of social and psychological conditions is met, when the phenomenon finds in a witness a ready believer, then revelation takes place.

Everything works as if the revelation were designed to isolate the witness, prophet, or believer from his social environment. He often becomes an outcast and has to flee. This has been the fate of numerous UFO witnesses. In France, several farmers saw their fields nearly ruined by curious or antagonistic crowds. The man in Michigan who reported the Swamp Gas case was jeered at in the streets, and people came in cars to throw bottles at his house.

The believers, if they seek a climate in which to pursue their new life in accordance with the implications of their vision, have to create their own sect and move away. Moses did this. So did Joseph Smith. Often one sees the leader deserted by his wife and family. The spouse is especially likely to feel

rejected and to betray him at the time when he or she most needs comfort. The wife of Martin Harris burned 116 newly translated pages of the Book of Mormon. The wives of several American policemen involved in modern UFO incidents divorced them.

Sometimes the specific instructions given to the believers are such that their group continues to be persecuted for centuries (Jews) and have to endure great hardships before finding a place where they can settle down (Israel, Utah). The leaders are harassed by crowds (in one town the police chief's own trailer was destroyed by fire, blamed on arson) and occasionally put to death (Jesus was crucified; Joseph Smith was lynched by a crowd in Illinois).

I think the stage is set for the appearance of new faiths, centered on the UFO belief. To a greater degree than all the phenomena modern science is confronting, the UFO can inspire awe, the sense of the smallness of man, and an idea of the possibility of contact with the cosmic. The religions we have briefly surveyed began with the miraculous experience of one person, but today there are thousands for whom the belief in otherworldly contact is based on intimate conviction, drawn from what they regard as personal contact with UFOs and their occupants. The phenomenon and its effects are working here as they have worked at Fatima and Lourdes and in other places: as a spiritual control system.

The table below should make this clear. The first column summarizes the physical effects described by witnesses of the miracles we have reviewed, in the actual words of the persons who reported them. The second column contains descriptions of the state of the persons contacted by UFOs, both during and after the experience; the sighting references are to the catalogue published in my earlier book, Passport to Magonia. I think the reader can draw his or her own conclusions. I have barely scratched the surface. Indeed, I invite you to seek other documents in any library to complete this morphology or miracles with fresh material.

**Religious Miracles**

**UFO Events**

”A frosty mist, a brightening cloud”

”They saw a light spreading around them like a

Guadalupe, December 9, 1531

mist”

Magonia, case 402

”A shock that affected the whole body”

”He was found unconscious”

”Loss of sense of time”

”Fainting, amnesia and return to the site in a ”So exhausted he couldn't move”

trancelike state”

”Fell to the ground and remained unconscious”

Magonia, case 482

Smith, September 21, 1823

”He felt pricklings throughout his body, had to

stop, lost his balance several times”

Magonia, case 102

”A pillar of light which descended”

”He found a strong light beam aimed at him”

”A conduit right up to Heaven”

”A vertical beam of light was aimed at him, ”A light appearing in the room”

disappeared with a flash”

Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon,

Magonia, case 921

1820 and 1823

”A golden colored cloud”

”The object went up to a cloud of unusual color,

”A great noise like the sound of a storm”

which flew against the wind”

Lourdes, February 11, 1858

Magonia, case 575

”Took off with a rush of air that rocked the car”

Magonia, case 81

”Lost all power of speech and thought”

”He fell unconscious as a vivid light enveloped

”Knew not where she was”

him. He was unable to move his arm for three

”Her arm was paralyzed”

days, and suffered from pain and extreme

Lourdes, February 11, 1858

nervousness”

Magonia, case 912

”Left in a trance”

”The witness felt so weak all of a sudden that he

”Fell from exhaustion”

had to drop the gun”

Fatima, spring 1916

Magonia, case 339

”A transparent white cloud”

”They saw a large source of light in mid-air and

”White light gliding above the treetops”

heard piercing whistling sounds”

”Rumble of a powerful wind”

Magonia, case 870

Fatima, April 1915 and spring 1916

”It took off with a swooshing sound”

Magonia, case 77

”The power annihilates them”

”The boy arrived home like a madman. The ”Deprives them of the use of their bodily horse and the dog were paralyzed for several senses”

minutes”

”No strenght the next day”

Magonia, case 916

Fatima, summer 1916

”He found himself paralyzed and observed that

birds had stopped singing and that cows seemed

unable to move”

Magonia, case 82

”A glowing light almost blinded them”

”The witness was suddenly engulfed in a bluish-

”A bright flash”

white light so dazzling he had to stop”

Fatima, May 13, 1917

Magonia, case 870

”A cloud rose from the vicinity of the tree”

”An unusual noise, a whirlwind of flames

”Tree branches were bent”

coming towards the vineyard”

”An explosion”

”Plants moved violently”

Fatima, June 13, 1917

”It flew south with a deafening roar”

Magonia, case 391

”A buzzing or humming sound”

”It moved slowly, producing a humming sound

”A loud noise”

and illuminating their car”

Fatima, July 13, 1917

Magonia, case 425

”A small whitish cloud forms”

”A flattened dome giving off a blinding light,

”Falling flower petals, melt away”

illuminating the countryside”

”A luminous globe spinning through the clouds” ”It flew away while a bright cloud slowly fell to ”A bright flash”

the ground at the site”

Fatima, August 13, 1917

Magonia, case 255

”A globe of light settles about a tree”

”A silvery disk maneuvering in the sky”

”A strange fragnance”

”A feeling of intense cold”

”Lowering of temperature”

”A powerful odor as the object left”

”Bright flash,” ”roar of a rocket”

Magonia, case 615

Fatima, August 19, 1917

”A globe of light advancing along the valley”

”They heard a strange humming sound and saw

”Comes from E to W and rests on the tree”

two disks hovering 1 m. above the ground”

”A white cloud forms”

”They rose with a sharp whistling sound, while

”Shiny white petals fall”

trees below them bent double”

Fatima, September 13, 1917

Magonia, case 442

”A weird disk that turns rapidly”

”A disk three times as large as the sun, red and

”A flat disk plunges in zig-zag fashion”

purple, spinning rapidly was seen descending ”The clothes of the witnesses were dry in spite swiftly toward the ground”

of the recent rain”

Magonia, case 321

Fatima, October 13, 1917

”When the object left, a cloud of dense smoke was forming under the rain. The witness found the trees, grass and ground perfectly dry”

Magonia, case 292

# PART THREE: A CHALLENGE TO RESEARCH

There is in many of us, obviously, a deep-seated desire to assent to extraterrestrial forces – to be embraced by them, overwhelmed by them, and if possible deprived by them of our own weary responsibility for ourselves.

"Hiccups from Outer Space"

Russell Davies, reviewing Close Encounters of the Third Kind in The Observer, March 19, 1978

Although the UFO phenomenon is highly complex and stretches the boundaries of the scientific method, I am not prepared to abandon the rational approach to knowledge for conclusions based on faith, intuition, or the alleged messages recieved by "channels" and contactees. There is too much at stake.

We have a rare opportunity to improve scientific techniques and to glimpse beyond the limits of ordinary reality. But it would be foolish to attempt it without a clear recognition of certain pitfalls.

What I will call, in Chapter Eight, the "triple coverup" is concerned with these pitfalls: the UFO phenomenon is shielded from direct study by the persistent, misguided official denial of its very existence; it is made more confusing by the reactions and fears of witnesses; and it is further protected from ultimate discovery by its own structure.

The subject also carries political overtones. As a source of rumors within military as well as civilian populations, UFO stories can be manipulated for a variety of reasons that may have nothing to do with the government's interest in the phenomenon. We live in a world where any rumor can be exploited, any cult is a potential force, any belief can alter established regimes. The expectation of extraterrestrial visitors is a powerful potential source of new

social and political trends.

There is no proof that the UFO phenomenon is of extraterrestrial origin. On the contrary, we see in Chapter Nine that several compelling arguments converge to deny the extraterrestrial hypothesis.

Finally, in Chapter Ten, I present a possible framework for an extension of our current research into the form of reality where the UFO phenomenon seems to originate.

## 8. Fighting the Triple Coverup

We are pleased to acknowledge receipt of your letter... regarding the photographs showing UFOs in formational flight, which you mention were taken by Captain Orrego of the Chilean Navy near Antarctica in 1948.

Regarding this matter we wish to inform you that recently we recieved a communication from Captain Orrego stating that he had not seen any UFOs over Antarctica in 1948.

Therefore the photographs requested by you do not exist.

Letter from the Chief of the Chilean Naval Mission to an American writer

It is forbidden for TV, radio, newspapers, and other news media to divulge UFO reports without the prior censorship of the Brazilian Air Force.

Institutional Act No. 5, State Security Brazilian Government Regulation

The Invisible College

After some thirty years of research into this phenomenon, I have reached new conclusions.

Tentative as they are, they shed light on the experiences of "abductees" and on the reluctance of professional scientists to analyze the facts.

I believe that a UFO is both a physical entity with mass, inertia, volume, and physical parameters that we can measure, and a window into another reality. Is this why witnesses can give us at the same time a consistent factual narrative and a description of contact with forms of life that fit no acceptable framework? These forms of life, such as the small gray men seen by Kathy, may be real, yet a product of our dreams. Like our dreams, we can look into their hidden meaning, or we can ignore them. But like our dreams, they may also shape our lives in many ways.

The phenomenon has made a significant impact in my own experience. On two

occasions I have tracked some unknown objects, using small telescopes. A few of my astronomer colleagues made similar observations, and, after making inquiries, we became aware of sightings kept confidential by professional astronomers the world over. The objects we were tracking were not spectacular, but the reaction they elicited among French scientists fascinated me. Instead of asking if these seemingly maneuverable and "impossible" objects could be a manifestation of some advanced technology (and in some cases they may well have been terrestrial), they thought only of suppressing the records.

They did this by denying every observation, by blaming it on airplanes or planets when the documentation was unassailable, and by destroying the data when it was demonstrated that no airplane could have behaved as the objects did.

The insight I derived from this early experience with dogmatic scientific skepticism brought me into contact with professionals who, like myself, wanted to understand the nature of the phenomenon, and especially to determine whether or not it had an intelligent origin. This group has grown larger over the years. Whimsically, it calls itself the "Invisible College."

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the American astronomer who served for over twenty years as the Air Force's scientific consultant on UFOs, explained that name in an article called "The UFO Mystery," published in the FBI Bulletin (February 1975): Way back in the "dark ages" of science, when scientists themselves were suspected of being in league with the Devil, they had to work privately. They often met clandesinely to exchange views and the results of their various experiments. For this reason, they called themselves the Invisible College. And it remained invisible until the scientists of that day gained respectability when the Royal Society was chartered by Charles II in the early 1660's.

My interest in UFOs has gone through several phases, but my curiosity has never been satisfied about the behavior of scientists who destroy, distort, or simply ignore the very facts they should investigate. Scientists are not the only ones to blame for the unfortunate stigma still attached to this subject, but such a gap has appeared between the academic position and the beliefs of millions of people that a reexamination of the entire problem is now imperative.

We have, on one hand, the facts – thousands of unexplained observations by reliable witnesses.

They stand as a monument to the limitations of our understanding. My book Passport to Magonia, published in 1970, contained a catalogue of 923 unexplained close encounters, and the size of this evidence is increasing daily.

On the other hand, we have a paucity of theories to account for this richness of data. Either these encounters must be invention, delusion, hoax, and mirages, the experts tell us, or else we are being visited by an extraterrestrial race. I cannot subscribe to either explanation. I have argued for many years that the phenomenon could not be explained by hoax and illusion alone, that it contains an opportunity to obtain genuine new knowledge. In this section I hope to go a step further and show why these unexplained observations need not represent a visitation from space visitors, but something even more interesting: a window toward undiscovered dimensions of our own environment.

Much of my motivation for examining critically the extraterrestrial theory has come from a study of the information of witness accounts, processed on a computer using modern techniques of analysis.

Many of these accounts come from witnesses who describe the occupants of the craft; this material is rich enough for us to form a good idea of these beings' physiology and behavior, if it in fact corresponded to the conditions of biological evolution we can assume on other planets. What we obtain instead is a picture of a different reality that seems to cut through our own at right angles. It is the reality of Magonia. But there is more.

In 1971, after an unusual UFO sighting, several puzzling objects fell from the sky. These mysteious fragments were picked up by a Texan who made the mistake of showing them to his friends. The next day two men from Air Force Intelligence came to his door, exhibited their identification papers, and politely requested the evidence. The witness threw them out rudely with a statement that I find admirable: "God has made everything in this world, and He has made flying saucers, too, whatever they are. These fragments have fallen into my backyard, and therefore God clearly intended for me to have them. If He had wanted the Air Force to have them, He would have dumped them on the Pentagon!"

In a survey of technically trained witnesses who had seen an unidentified flying object, it was found that the proportion of those who had bothered to call the Air Force while Project Blue Book was operating was only one in twelve! This attitude toward the authorities is an important component of the UFO phenomenon. The idea of a cosmic mystery lingers in the more shadowy areas of our imagination. Could it be that the reaction of our society to suppress the reports, to "cover them up" individually and collectivity, is as much a part of the UFO phenomenon as the objects themselves?

## The First Coverup: Official Denial

The first level of coverup is in the reporting of UFOs. It is the result of the closed mind and negative attitude of government, scientific, and military authorities. More specifically, I call the "first coverup" the efforts made by those in a position of authority to discourage the reporting of a UFO incident. This can range from the hostile laughter of a local deputy sheriff to intimidation of pilots by their commanding officers, or confiscation of evidence from witnesses. In some cases, the public is led to believe that reporting UFOs is unnecessary because the government knows all about them.

Late in 1964, for instance, several friends in Paris sent me interesting data. It seems that somebody there was trying to spread UFO stories through the French news media (the French word for such spreading of rumors isintoxication). A former member of the Intelligence Service who was regarded as a reliable source made statements to the effect that the British military was carefully monitoring the UFO situation and was pooling its information with the Russians! He went on to say that both countries had now come to the conclusion that the objects were real. Another story circulated among Paris journalists came from an American who claimed that the FBI had compiled exhaustive studies of the U.S. cases, a rumor that appears at least partially true, because some landing cases have had elements that brought the event within the jurisdiction of the Bureau.

In both of these stories, which originated from quasiofficial sources, there was the same reassuring theme: people should not worry about UFOs and should leave the investigation in the hands of the competent authorities, who knew everything there was to know. We were well protected.

In the meantime, there was mounting uneasiness among the scientists who had been involved in the UFO debate. Observations were not only coming from witnesses who have outdoor activities, like farmers and truck drivers, but from technically trained observers like engineers, doctors, and professors. The U.S. government must not have known everything there was to know, because in August 1965, Colonel Spaulding made inquiries among top scientists associated with his office at the Air Force. He asked them specifically what they thought of submitting the UFO files to the Academy of Sciences, or to some such highly respected body, in a renewed effort to reassure the public and find out the truth. As a result, early in November 1965, the Scientific Advisory Board of the Air Force met in Dallas and discussed the UFO question. The idea of a so-called "independent" study was first considered at that meeting. A physicist, Dr. Brien O'Brien, headed a special study group that came back with the recommendation that the Air Force spend $250,000 a year to obtain "high-grade data." The very fact that a new study was recommended seems to show that any suppression of information or any leaking of wild rumors was not the result of a secret military policy on the UFO subject but more likely a product of the confusion that is rampant at all levels of federal bureaucracy. The military was reacting to the sightings in direct proportion to their impact on the press, which they were trying to minimize, and these reactions were clumsy. The confusion that resulted was unbelievable. The best example of this was the Swamp Gas crisis.

## The Swamp Gas Scandal

The Swamp Gas episode played a decisive role in influencing public opinion at a key moment in the history of the UFO problem, so it provides a model for local and national passion. The Swamp Gas crisis began for me on Monday morning, March 21, 1966. I was listening to a Chicago radio program when the news of the Michigan sightings was broadcast: four objects were said to have flown over a farm near Ann Arbor, and one of them had landed in a swampy area. It sounded fairly typical. In 1964 I had established that more landings tended to occur in isolated places, a fact that was first apparent in the computer analysis of French cases. Eventually, using Air Force data, I convinced Dr. Hynek that the same pattern existed in the United States. Swamps like the Everglades region of Florida and rugged regions, like central France or the American Northwest, were among the places UFOs seemed to prefer. In 1965

as I have pointed out, there had been a series of reports by Australian farmers describing craft that left circular traces in swamp vegetation there.

That Monday morning I called Dr. Hynek to alert him to the sightings in Michigan, and he in turn called Project Blue Book in Dayton, Ohio, to propose that it investigate at once. He suggested that we go there before reporters and curiosity seekers destroyed the evidence. The officer in Dayton was not interested, as Dr. Hynek later told me.

"The case hasn't been reported officially to the Air Force," said the officer.

"That's not very scientific," Dr. Hynek remarked.

"I don't give a damn," was the literal answer.

Half an hour later, Project Blue Book called back: "How soon can you be in Ann Arbor?"

"I thought you weren't interested!"

"Well, someone has reported the case officially to us just a minute ago."

"Who was that?"

"The Pentagon! They are deluged with calls. Every reporter in the country wants to know what's going on."

The next morning, Dr. Hynek was in Michigan. What happened in Ann Arbor is a classic example of misunderstanding with the press. Hynek was under tremendous pressure to release a statement prematurely, as the urging of public relations people from the Air Force. In his statement, he called for thorough investigation of the phenomenon but also mentioned that somepeople in Michigan might have seen swamp gas. The press took this for a final verdict and exploded with anger. How dare this academic man from Chicago challenge the word of an honest farmer and seriously suggest that he had not seen what was evidently a real flying saucer?

Those irate comments came from the same newspapers who for years had ridiculed witnesses just like this poor farmer, and had given no support

whatsoever to Dr. Hynek when he begged them to report UFO cases more accurately. Suddenly it became fashionable to believe in flying saucers. In March 1966, reporters were beating the bushes of Michigan looking for Martians and UFO experts.

The switch took the Air Force by surprise and destroyed the image of Project Blue Book in a few short days.

Public reaction carried the case to Washington, with help from a then-local politician, Gerald Ford, who demanded that full attention be given to what had become known as the Swamp Gas scandal. A meeting of the space committee of the Senate pondered the question first and decided quickly that NASA should not get involved. The space agency had its public image to preserve and declined to have anything to do with the subject. So they handed this hot potato to the armed forces committee of the House.

Early in April 1966, the Secretary of the Air Force was reported to be in favor of a scientific analysis of the 648 cases classified as "unidentified" at that time in the Blue Book files. Late that month, the governor of Florida and several reporters saw an unknown flying object from the governor's private plane. These reports created a stir, but the outrage over the Michigan incident had already subsided. It was almost two months old and no longer newsworthy. An official coverup was falling back into place. A television documentary carried the debunking of the subject to new heights: it showed Harvard astronomer Donald Menzel pouring some benzine over a tankful of acetone to demonstrate optical properties that were common knowledge since the eighteenth century. He was trying to convince the audience that UFOs were nothing but mirages. "Let me know next time it rains benzine, will you?" I asked my wife. "We'll go out and watch the flying saucers!"

Menzel's number was followed by a classical interview with a "contactee" who was relied upon to provide comic relief by describing his meetings with the "space brothers." His edited statements seemed to be carefully chosen to make him look as crazy as possible. In contrast with this man, the next interview was an impressive discussion with another astronomer who stated with authority that extraterrestrial visitations were extremely improbable. The documentary also contained an interview with a military officer who stated that no UFOs were ever detected on radar screens and an interview with an

astronomer who declared that no UFOs were ever seen or photographed by satellite tracking stations.

Both statements were outright lies. It is true that radar never "sees" UFOs, but that is only because military operators call them something else! In their jargon they speak of UCTs, "uncorrelated targets." At the time the documentary was shown, the Western Defense System was recording about seven hundred of these baffling UCTs per month! There had even been a suggestion by a highly respected astronomer that the military modify their computer program to gather information about these UCTs rather than ignoring them because they didn't fit the trajectory of incoming missilies.

The suggestion was not implemented.

Scared Scientists

Why are scientists remaining silent? Many astronomers must know what I knew from my days at Paris Observatory, namely that we were tracking unidentified objects and even photographing them.

Were professional scientists afraid of the emotional reaction their statements might trigger in a generally uninformed and credulous public? Or were they simply afraid of losing their reputations?

Whatever the reason, it could not justify the deliberate destruction of scientific data. Even the idea of not saying anything that might cause fear did not hold water. The Michigan incident proved that fear could spread much faster, and with much more destructive effects, among a population that had been kept systematically ignorant of the facts. Child psychologists know very well that it is better to prepare the child for the idea that his grandfather is not going to live forever than to let him discover it when death suddenly strikes. Similarly, by denying the existence of the mystery the scientific community is taking serious chances with the belief system of the public. In my opinion, such attitudes have contributed to the long-term loss of popular support and respect for science, and these attitudes continue to be one of the factors that drives the public toward the many cults, which plague this field.

Throughout that period much was happening under the surface, however. We

began receiving letters and phone calls from specialists who wanted to participate in the investigation of the phenomenon.

In his absorbing book The UFO Experience, Dr. Hynek has described how this little group grew during the late sixties and early seventies. If this network ever decided to become visible, a brilliant panel of scientists could rapidly be assembled from its ranks to deal effectively with this new area of research. Given current conditions, however, it is probably best for these people to continue their investigations in private. The history of the Condon investigation at the University of Colorado convinced many of us of this.

## What Condon Didn't Know

My own impression of the Condon fiasco is not simply a coverup scenario. I believe that the Air Force late in 1966 was utterly fed up and wanted to get out of the business. After over twenty years of analysis of this problem, the military was in essence saying to academia, with good reason, "We have found no evidence that it lies within our mission. The objects are not openly behaving as enemies of the United States. We do not even know what they are made of, and every time we submit a case to the scientists they ridicule our pilots, who are only guilty of trusting their own eyes and their own instruments. We have had enough of this. Here are the data. It is your turn to see what you can make of these phenomena."

The scientific community, which had been so eager to make statements before the cameras to explain UFOs as long as the Air Force was in charge, reacted coolly to the suggestion that their own pet explanations should be seriously tested on a larger scale. Several universities, including Harvard and Columbia, were contacted by the Department of Defense, but they turned down the assignment and the research money for it.

The Europeans followed this development with keen interest and eagerly anticipated the American decision, for their official policy would be modeled after the U.S. stand on the matter. There was explosive material in the European files. Many of the sightings were extremely well documented, and classified investigations of the highest caliber had been made much more thoroughly and professionally than even the best cases in the U.S. Air Force files. And no wonder. Some of the witnesses had been of the highest political

rank. In one European country, a near landing had taken place on the chief of state's private estate! The craft had been described in detail by members of the official's entourage. This meant that the investigation had been conducted at the very top level. The chauffeur of this high political authority, as described in a report of the sighting, while driving through the estate, sees what he believes to be an aircraft trying to land on the road, directly in front of him. He stops the car immediately. The object passes just a few meters above the stopped car and, while doing this, causes violent vertical vibrations in the vehicle. A few seconds later, the object reverses its course and passes again, now in the opposite direction, with the same effects on the car. Then, having regained its position above some trees where it had initially appeared, it makes a fast change of altitude, a ninety-degree tilting with respect to the horizontal, and darts away to the west.

The witness is highly reliable [the report goes on]. We found that the object, an upside-down plate with a central turret and portholes, could be of the dimensions reported by the witness, namely twenty meters.

Such an observation was no joke. Yet neither the U.S. Air Force nor the American academic community was aware of the extent of the problem in Western Europe. The Soviets were possibly even more interested than the West Europeans.

The rumor that spread in Europe through "informal channels" during the summer of 1966 was difficult to verify, but in view of later events in the history of the Condon committee it has some interest. According to that rumor, the Air Force was completely frustrated with the UFO problem and was looking for an excuse to get rid of it. The only problem was to find a university willing to write a negative report after a cursory examination of the facts. This, I repeat, was only a rumor. But this rumor was taken seriously enough in Paris to prevent the creation of an investigation committee similar to the American one. The Russians made some moves toward the creation of a committee but cleverly awaited the developments in the United States before funding it and giving it an official stamp of approval. In Boulder, Colorado, a group was finally being assembled with much fanfare, headed by Dr. Condon, a prestigious physicist close to retirement. The group had recieved a sizeable grant to ponder ufology, and its report was due in 1969. It would prove to be

negative.

## Destroying the Data

In November 1966, when the Condon committee started gathering testimony from people who had done research into UFO cases, Dr. Hynek and I were the first scientists asked to come to Boulder to brief the group. We soon noticed that one of the administrators, Bob Low, was clearly the key decision maker on the team, although he had no science degree and seemed to have little interest in the matter. Yet there was a certain euphoric feeling in the room, a sense of embarking on a unique adventure. There was little passion in the press now; the Michigan swamp gas crisis had been largely forgotten. The problem was in the hands of the scientists, and it had become as dull as any venture that is in the process of being rationalized away by the academic mill. If the journey to the moon can be turned into the exasperating bore that modern technology has generated, there is no reason to expect that the same lack of interest will not settle over the UFO mystery once it falls into the hands of Big Science! (The first astronauts to die in orbit will probably die of ennui when they run out of buttons to push, digits to read out, and jokes with Houston about the football scores.) As early as February 1967, members of the Condon committee were privately approaching their scientific colleagues on other campuses, asking them how they would react if the committee's final report to the Air Force were to recommend closing down Project Blue Book. Not surprisingly, a few months later the work of the committee had come to a standstill. Field investigations were nonexistent. Questionnaires were sent out to witnesses, but only one assistant was aviable to encode the results for the computer file, where the bulk of the information was provided by the three thousand punched cards I had turned over to the committee.

A minority faction of the group caused a crisis when it rebelled. After a series of incidents that Dr. Dave Saunders documented in his book, UFOs? Yes! , the team split into two factions. An early restricted memorandum discovered and published by the minority group provided evidence that the Condon committee had never intended to look seriously into the UFO problem. Publication of this document so outraged Condon that he fired the minority group and ran the project without any further consideration of the possible reality of the phenomenon.

The files of the committee were eventually destroyed. One would think that they belonged to the scientific fraternity or to the public domain, since American taxpayers paid for the "research." Not so. When the project wrote its report the files were locked up by the University of Colorado in Boulder. They were later transferred to a private home and were burned shortly thereafter.

## The Second Coverup: Convenient Explanations

The little town of Carteret lies on the western coast of Normandy, France, about twenty miles from Cherbourg. It is situated directly to the north of wonderful Mont-Saint-Michel, a monastery that, as legend goes, was built by the devil. On December 2, 1973, a very strange thing happened on the beach at Carteret. Two fishermen, Mr. G. Jean, forty-four, and his son Noel, eighteen, got up at 5:00 A.M. to retrieve their nets at low tide. When they arrived on the beach half an hour later, they saw a very bright object directly over the area where their nets had been spread. They walked toward it until they estimated they were about 150 yards away, and it appeared as an intense yellow "window," eight feet long and five feet high, emitting a cone-like beam directed toward the ground.

The two fishermen were afraid and decided not to go closer. They tried to work without thinking about the object, but then it changed suddenly: the yellow light was turned off. Over the area where it had been hovering there was now a blue-green "football" that flew away at 6:05 A.M. Jeans reported the sighting to the French police.

My wife and I investigated this sighting during a research trip through the west of France in December 1973. Many strange data came to the surface. First we found that this was not the first sighting. Two months earlier, the young man had seen three yellow spheres in staggered formation over the same beach while driving with his brother-in-law. That sighting took place about 7:00 P.M., and the spheres appeared to be about twelve to fifteen feet above ground.

"What was the pattern of the lights?" we asked Noel Jean.

"There was a yellow light, a second one above, a third one to the left above again, and some metal in between."

"What was it doing?"

"The lights came on and off and it followed the car."

"And you, what did you do?"

"We stopped to look at it, and when we got back into the car the lights were turned off on the object."

Since the second sighting the elder man has decided not to go out of his house anymore. He no longer goes fishing. He locks himself in his room when the investigators come to ask him questions.

Does he know something he does not want to discuss?

We saw no traces on the beach. The gendarmes confirmed to us that the grass in the dunes had not been affected. The barbed wire nearby was checked for magnetic effects. The test was negative. We heard that a local ham radio amateur had noticed at the time of the near landing that his reciever was blocked out for several minutes.

"It was in the middle of the nets," Noel Jean told us.

"The papers have said that it measured 1.5 by 1.5 meters," we pointed out.

"That's not true. It was rectangular, about 2.5 by 1.5 meters. It was as big as a stove!"

"What time did it end?"

"We got there at 5:30. It disappeared between 5:50 and 6:05."

"What happened when the object disappeared?"

"We went away looking at the rectangular light all the time, and it turned toward the dunes, then came back on us. It was turned off, and then we saw a small blue-green ball above the spot. It got smaller, and after six we couldn't see anything anymore."

"How big was the ball?"

"It was like a soccer ball."

"What did you do when you got on the beach and saw the rectangle of light?"

"I started going toward it, but it got brighter and brighter. So my father said, 'Forget it, come back to this side.'"

There is a large radar installation near Cherbourg, at a place called Mauperthuis, located thirty-eight kilometers away from Carteret. The range of the antenna is two hundred kilometers. At 6:10 A.M. on that particular morning it picked up an echo in the southwest, moving to the north of Cherbourg.

An object flying from the direction of Carteret toward Great Britain would have followed this course. The same morning something peculiar happened on the coast. The French trawler Archipel, which was close to the rocky shore of Urville directly west of Cherbourg (on the trajectory the object must have followed if the radar echo corresponds to the UFO), went off course. In view of the frequently observed magnetic perturbations in the vicinity of a UFO, it can be hypothesized that its magnetic navigation system gave erroneous indications. The boat got too close to the coast, hit the rocks, and sank, fortunately without loss of life.

The observation of the yellow "window" on the beach had lasted no less than five minutes. Why had the two fishermen not walked closer to the object to ascertain its nature? There seems to be two reasons: first, the "window" became brighter as they walked within 150 yards, and this discouraged them from approaching any closer; and, second, they felt "paralyzed with fear." Whether this paralysis was an actual physiological inhibition or the result of psychological fear – or both – has not been ascertained.

The observation had taken place early Sunday morning. The following Friday, local people discovered some interesting items on a nearby beach. These consisted of a complete set of professional underwater exploration equipment, a radioactivity tester, sonic signalers, along with trousers and jackets with English-language labels.

Suddenly the local police, with the assistance of the DST (French counterintelligence) and the SDECE (main intelligence arm of the French government), "discovered" that the whole sighting was a case of underwater radiation detection. Such was the substance of the carefully designed rumor that began circulating.

This is what I call the second coverup: the release of carefully contrived official "explanations" that do not really explain anything but which provide skeptics with an excuse for dismissing the story.

Difficult cases are swept under the rug at all cost if psychological pressure on the witness is not enough to discourage him from telling his story in the first place.

How could the discovery of some diving equipment "on a nearby beach" explain the two observations of the unidentified objects? What about the radar echo? The "explanation" is completely invalid, but it is typical of stories engineered to discredit witnesses and reassure local populations. These objectives are generally reached. The witnesses are intimidated, and the local police, the only source of accurate data, are generally anxious to see things return to normal.

Besides, they have jobs to protect.

We were fortunate to be able to investigate this case within a few days of the events, before the coverup was organized. What would be the reaction of a scientist stumbling upon such a case a few weeks or a few months later? He would simply brush it aside, and with some reason. The witnesses quickly become uncooperative; one of them stays home and will not talk to visitors; the local police no longer have anything to say; the military radar operators in Cherbourg have recieved orders to deny their statements of the night in question; and the information that appears in the newspapers is confused, garbled, and inaccurate.

A local newspaper published a cartoon showing the little town of Carteret with a flying saucer and a Martian in the foreground. A smiling Frenchman has approached the little Martian and asks: "What kind of mileage do you get?" Laughter releases the lingering tension.

In a later development, which will appear ironic in light of the coverup attempts at Carteret, a French Cabinet member acknowledged for the first time the reality of the UFO problem as a subject fit for scientific research. In March 1974, the Minister of Defense, Robert Galley, agreed to participate in a series of radio interviews that included reports from witnesses and statements by three French scientists who had studied the UFO phenomenon for many years: Dr. Pierre Guerin, of the Paris Astrophysical Institute; Dr. Claude Poher, head of scientific studies for the French equivalent of NASA; and myself. What the Defense Minister told reporter Jean-Claude Bourret that day might be a lesson for other government officials around the world: I am deeply convinced that we must regard these phenomena with an attitude of completely open mind. A number of breakthroughs have been made in the history of mankind because someone has attempted to explain the unexplainable. Now, among these aerial phenomena that have been gathered under the label of UFOs, it is undeniable that there are facts that are unexplained or badly explained.

In 1954 the Defense Ministry created a special section for the gathering and study of witness accounts regarding these unidentified flying objects. I have before me a number of these accounts, that have developed over the years until 1970; there are approximately fifty of them. Among the earliest ones is a statement of personal observation by Lieutenant d'Emery, Jean, from Air Force Base 107 at Villacoublay, dated November 20, 1953. There are also reports from the Gendarmerie and some observations from pilots and Air Center commanders. There are many elements, whose convergence is of concern, during the year 1954. Therefore the attitude one must have is that of a completely open mind, an attitude in which one does not deny the observations a priori. Our ancestors in prior centuries must have denied the reality of a number of things that seem to us today absolutely elementary, like piezo-electricity, or static electricity, not to mention biological phenomena.

In fact, the entire development of science consists in the fact that, at a given time, we realize that we have had mistaken ideas about the reality of certain phenomena.

It is difficult to add anything to this statement. It is not clear that the simple fact of keeping an open mind about UFOs will in itself make a breakthrough possible, but science should certainly welcome the lifting of the government's

attitude that has prevented it from examining the facts.

## The Third Coverup: The UFO Denies Itself

We have so far discussed two forms of coverup: (1) pressure placed on witnesses to discourage them from telling their story; and (2) fabrication of "explanations" when a witness does speak. I believe that to these factors we must add a third one: the built-in silencing mechanism of the phenomenon itself.

On December 3, 1967, a patrolman named Herb Schirmer, of Ashland, Nebraska, had an experience that deserves to be placed in the context of the stories of the abduction of Betty and Barney Hill and of the Pascagoula fishermen. At 2:30 A.M. Schirmer saw on the road an object with a row of flickening lights. Believing it to be a truck, he turned on his high beams. The object took off. The twenty-two-year-old patrolman drove back to the station and wrote his entry: "Saw a flying saucer at the junction of highways 6 and 63. Believe it or not."

Schirmer went home with a strong headache and a buzzing noise that prevented him from sleeping.

He also had a red welt below the left ear. The case came to the attention of the Condon committee, and Schirmer was placed under hypnosis. It then became clear that there was a twenty-minute period during which he remembered nothing. Later, at the suggestion of another researcher, he was again placed under hypnosis, revealing an extraordinary sequence of events.

As he saw the object take off, the patrolman decided to follow it and drove up a dirt road toward the intense light. He tried to call the police at Wahoo, Nebraska, but the radio was not working and the car engine died. The object, metallic and football-shaped, was surrounded by a silvery glow. It was making a "whooshing" sound, and the lights were flickering rapidly. Legs appeared under the craft, and it landed. Schirmer wanted to drive home, but he was " prevented by something in his mind. "

The occupants of the craft came toward the car. He was unable to draw his revolver. In the standard pattern they shot some greenish gas toward the car,

pulled a small object from a holster, flashed a bright light at him, and he passed out.

The next thing Schirmer remembered, under hypnosis, was rolling down the car window and talking to the occupant of the craft, who pressed something against the side of his neck and asked him: "Are you the watchman over this place?" then pointed to the power plant and said, "Is this the only source of power you have?"

Schirmer was taken aboard the craft. He saw control panels and computer-like machines. The occupants were wearing coveralls with an emblem of a winged serpent. One of them pushed a button and tapes started running. "Through my mind... somehow... he is telling me things.... My mind hurts...."

The occupants gave Schirmer a lot of interesting but clearly misleading information. They wanted him to believe that they came from a nearby galaxy. They had bases in the United States. Their craft was operated by reverse electromagnetism. Their ships had been knocked out of the air by radar, by ionization. They drew power from large water reservoirs. Schirmer got the idea that they have no pattern for contacting people, it is by pure chance so the government cannot determine any patterns about them and there will be a lot more contacts.

To a certain extent they want to puzzle people, he reported.

They know they are being seen too frequently and they are trying to confuse the public's mind.

Finally the occupant told Schirmer that he was not to remember the inside of the ship. He concluded: " You will not speak wisely about this night. We will return to see you two more times. "

And at one point, in a hauntingly beautiful moment, one of the men took Schirmer to the large window of the ship, pointed to the deserted landscape around them, and said gravely: "Watchman, someday you will see the Universe!" If the occupants are so advanced, and do not want Schirmer to speak wisely of that night, why could he remember so much of it under hypnosis? Have they not anticipated this method of disclosure? Or could it be

that some parts of the human mind are inaccessible to them? Could it be that their power is more limited than their actions imply? Could it be that someone, or something, is playing a fantastic trick on us?

## The Phenomenon Negates Itself

Perhaps you have had the opportunity to attend a magic show performed by an excellent master of that remarkable profession. He produces before you, under impossible conditions, a phenomenon that is clearly unexplainable. But then he appears to realize how disappointed the audience is.

Indeed, everyone feels almost insulted by the preposterousness of his performance. There must be a simple explanation, an obvious trick! You do not find it.... Then the magician explains everything: the table tops was hollow, the cane was made of small sliding sections that collapse into a different shape. Now you have understood everything, you kick yourself for not immediately percieving such a simple solution. You leave the room with a warm feeling of gratefulness and a certain amount of pride: "I am not so stupid after all. This performer hasn's had me fooled for long!"

As you get home, new doubts begin to creep into your rational mind. You obtain all the objects necessary for accomplishing the same trick by the simple method so nicely laid bare before you just an hour earlier; and then you realize that the explanation itself is impossible, that the magician never told you the real technique!

The UFO phenomenon enjoys the same recursive unsolvability. It leaves indices behind, but they seem to be even more maddeningly misleading than the witnesses' accounts. The phenomenon negates itself. It issues statements and demonstrates principles where some of the information conveyed is true and some is false. Determining which is the true half is as an exercise left to the investigator.

In another relevant case the main witness was fooled by sociologists; the believers were fooled by alleged spacemen calling themselves the "Guardians"; the public was fooled by the believers; and the sociologists may have been fooled by the phenomenon itself!

Contact with the group called the Guardians started when a midwesterner referred to as Mrs. Keech woke up one winter morning with a tingling or numbness in her arm: My whole arm felt warm right up to the shoulder.... I had the feeling that someone was trying to get my attention. Without knowing why, I picked up a pencil and a pad that were lying on the table near my bed. My hand began to write in another handwriting.

Through the messages she got, this woman was gradually introduced into something she regarded as the realms of the life beyond, until one day she recieved a message of comfort from an "Elder Brother." As described in Leon Festinger's book When Prophecy Fails: I am always with you. The cares of the day cannot touch you. We will teach them that seek and are ready to follow in the light. I will take care of the details. Trust in us. Be patient and learn, for we are there preparing the work for you as a connoiter. That is an earthly liaison duty before I come. That will be soon.

Mrs. Keech came to think of this as genuine "channeling" with higher entities and began telling people that amazing new knowledge was coming through. Soon a small sect formed in the midwestern city where she lived. One of the leaders of the sect was a "Dr. Armstrong," whose real name was Laughead, a man who later became involved in the Uri Geller affair. The Guardians gave the group teachings and advice. They also predicted future events, landings of flying saucers, and visits from spacemen. One of these predictions was of a spacecraft landing at a nearby military airfield. The small group drove to a spot from which they could see the runways and observed the scene and the sky in vain, but suddenly a man approached the party and, upon looking at him, all present felt an eerie reaction to his appearance. No one had seen him approaching. He was offered something to drink and declined. He walked with a curious, rigid bearing. A moment later he was gone, but no one had seen him go away! As such stories began circulating the belief structure of the little sect became better established. It accumulated its own folklore and even created its own vocabulary – special words with special meanings.

Mrs. Keech was now writing as much as fourteen hours a day. The teachings became increasingly concerned with religious matters, cosmology, and flying saucers. One day, the great message finally came through. It was forecasting a disaster, an earthquake and a flood, and the saving of the believers by their

Space Brothers:

The region of Canada, the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, to the Gulf of Mexico, into the Central America will be as changed. The great tilting of the land of the U.S. to the East will throw up mountains along the Central States.

The group now felt a special responsibility to tell the world about these momentous events. They issued press releases, some of which were picked up by local papers. This in turn attracted the attention of a team of sociologists at the University of Minnesota who were investigating the behavior of individuals in social movements based on specific prophecies. They obtained a Ford Foundation grant to study Mrs. Keech's group and recieved logistical support from the University's Laboratory for Research in Social Relations. They began infiltrating the sect, pretending to be sincere converts, and attending meetings to monitor the evolution of its beliefs as the appointed time for the fulfillment of the prophecy drew nearer.

Although the use of such deceptive methods by scientists is now very much under question, the book When Prophecy Fails, written by the sociologists on the basis of their investigations, is essential for anyone trying to understand the complex nature of the belief in UFOs. The book details the efforts made by members of the sect to warn mankind of impending doom and describes their belief that those who would be drowned would be spiritually reborn on other planets appropriate to their spiritual development, but that flying saucers would come down from the sky in time to save the believers from the flood. The predicted events, as the reader must be aware by now, did not come to pass. The midwestern part of the United States has not been engulfed by the ocean, and the many countries slated for destruction are still above sea level. What did this mean for the beliefs of the sect? It actually served to reinforce their conviction, because they could take credit for the avoidance of the destruction! Some earthquakes did take place in desert areas around the date of the catalysm. Had they struck a populated region the damage would have been considerable. Hence, they speculated, it may have been the light shed by the small group of faithful believers that had spared the country from disaster. Some members of the sect also theorized that it had been another test of their ability to believe blindly, to follow without discussion the orders they recieved from their Guardians, and to face ridicule without fear.

Why bring the story of Mrs. Keech into the discussion of a scientific study of UFOs? Many sociologists will argue that her case is typical of many small sects and cults and that adequate theories now exist to explain their behavior. To a very great extent this is true, but I am not convinced that the mechanism that gives rise to the founding of such movements is fully understood, and I do not believe that their potential impact on society has been made explicit.

The case of Mrs. Keech is important to all scientists who have an interest in the UFO phenomenon because it provides a prototype for an increasing number of groups that establish themselves around similar belief systems. One of the most publicized of these groups in recent years is the network of Uri Geller devotees, which has succeeded in arousing the interest of several leading physicists. In Geller's case, like Mrs. Keech's, there are several unexplained phenomena that provide a basis for the beliefs of the group. In both cases, too, we are told to expect "higher" knowledge to come from the UFOs. And in both cases there is an impact on the collective consciousness.

What about the prophetic element? Mrs. Keech predicted a flood and salvation from above. Uri Geller and Dr. Andrija Puharich once forecasted massive flying saucer landings. Many people around the country (whom author John Keel has appropriately called "the silent contactees") are keeping to themselves what they regard as revelations made to them by alien entities. Perhaps people have always had such experiences. Perhaps they were purely religious, hence private, in times past, and only the relative acceptance of modern UFO sightings by a segment of the media and by a few curious scientists has encouraged the partial disclosure of some of the contacts.

Whatever the case may be, we tend to discount too easily any phenomena that contain seemingly absurd elements. This is the third coverup.

It is tempting to place Mrs. Keech and all people like her into a category neatly labeled in sociological terms, like "doomsday believers" and those with "cognitive dissonance," preferably with the magic term "behavior" tacked on. Examining the details of her story, however, should make us a bit cautious. There is, for example, the matter of the strange man she met in the first prophetic instance. The academic investigators felt they were on such strong theoretical ground that they neglected to ascertain whether the mysterious appearance and disappearance of the stiff-legged entity could be confirmed by

others. This lack of follow-up must be deplored. On two other occasions, Mrs. Keech had been visited by strange people. The first incident followed the disclosure of her flood forecast in the local papers. Two men came to her door and asked to talk to her; one of them was a perfectly ordinary human, but his companion was very strange and did not say a single word during the visit. She asked who they were, and the first man replied, "I am of this planet, but he is not." The point of their discussion, which lasted for half an hour, was that she should not publicize her information beyond what she had already done. "The time is not right now," the man said before leaving with his companion. This encounter had been deadly serious. As a result Mrs. Keech gave up her plans to publish a book about her experiences.

There was another visit a few months later, this time by five young visitors who spent two hours trying to convince Mrs. Keech and a scientist who was a member of her group that their information was incorrect, that everything they were predicting was wrong.

The investigators again made no effort to identify these visitors, which is in my opinion a serious oversight. They simply reported, "Why these young men called at the house, what their purpose was, and who they were – these are things we do not know: they may have been practical jokers, or they may have had a serious purpose." In describing her discussion with the later visitors, Mrs. Keech said, shocked and weeping, that:

They kept forcing me to take back things. He kept trying to pressure me into saying they were not true. They kept telling me that what I said was all false and mixed up. And they told me that they were in contact with outer space too and all the writings I had were wrong and that everything I was predicting was wrong.

Now the ring of absurdity around Mrs. Keech was complete. She was experiencing the third coverup. The flood would not take place. The believers who had trusted all the signs and the obvious sincerity of their medium or channel would be left completely isolated – having lost or resigned their jobs, in some cases having sold all their earthly possessions, committed to a reality that only they could percieve; they would be forever unable to tell the whole story. The most highly educated man in the group, a local professor, would eventually comment: I've had to go a long way. I've given up just about

everything. I've cut every tie. I've burned every bridge. I've turned my back on the world. I can't afford to doubt. I have to believe.

And there isn't any other truth.... You're having your period of doubt now, but hang on, boy, hang on. This is a tough time but we know that the boys upstairs are taking care of us.

This is a frightening view, one that in the future may take new forms and engulf more people. Such is the result of the three coverups. There is a pattern behind this structure, and that pattern is not contact but control.

## Political Overtones

I have alluded to the fact that the major groups of UFO believers have been closely monitored by government agents. There is a good reason for this attention: their influence can be manipulated for political goals or simply as a test of various forms of deception. One of the recommendations of a recently declassified CIA/U.S. Air Force panel on UFOs, which met in Washington in 1953, was precisely to monitor the activities of civilian groups: The Panel took cognizance of the existence of such groups as the "Civilian Flying Saucer Investigators" or Los Angeles and the "Aerial Phenomena Research Organization" (Wisconsin). It was believed that such organizations should be watched because of their great influence on mass thinking if widespread sightings should occur. The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind.

It is difficult to be more explicit. This political control factor does explain certain bizarre aspects of the UFO problem, including the behavior of some celebrated contactees, who could have been set up in their roles in order to propagate alleged extraterrestrial messages in this and other countries.

For example, George Adamski has confessed that four U.S. government scientists were responsible for launching his career as an ambassador for the Space Brothers. These scientists were from the Point Loma Naval Electronics Laboratory near San Diego and from a "similar setup" in Pasadena.

They asked him if he would "cooperate in the collective attempt to get photographs of the strange craft moving through space." Adamski's major

supporter abroad was a former intelligence officer with the British Army, with whom I have personally met, and a Cambridge engineering graduate who now lives in Mexico. A man who hosted Adamski during his tour of Australia has told me that "Good old George" was traveling with a passport bearing special privileges.

The political factor also explains the deliberate infiltration of civilian UFO groups by persons linked to the intelligence world. In terms of social behavior control, civilian UFO groups would be as necessary to an effective mechanism as Project Blue Book or the Condon committee, because they would provide an escape valve for the steam of the enthusiasts and a useful channel for planted stories. Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, the former CIA chief who stated, "It is imperative that we learn what UFOs are and where they come from," and later joined the board of directors of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), could have lent credibility to the stratagem by deliberately promoting the extraterrestrial theory. Also among the leaders of NICAP, one of the most influential UFO groups in the fifties and sixties, were at least three well-known intelligence operatives: Bernard Corvalho, Nicholas de Rochefort, and Colonel Joseph Ryan, men who were trained practitioners of the modern techniques of psychological warfare.

It may seem preposterous for government to spend time and money testing the public's reaction to the idea of contact with extraterrestrials. Yet I strongly suspect at least two major UFO cases were covert experiments in rumor generation and in the deliberate creation of contactee cults (one of these cases took place in Spain, one in France). To the skeptical reader I can only point out that there are people on the government payroll whose job it is to devise contingency plans for all sorts of extreme situations. Under the Nixon administration, a White House task force had even proposed a scheme for the invasion of Cuba that involved a submarine equipped with lasers. It would "paint" an image of Christ over the island to simulate the Second Coming. This "miracle," it was thought, would disturb the Catholic population in Havana, paralyze communications, and disorganize the Cuban armed forces long enough for commandos to seize strategic points and overthrow the Castro regime.

In his well-documented book War on the Mind, clinical psychologist Peter Watson, who was a member of the Sunday Times "Insight" team which

investigated (among other things) the use of psychological warfare by the British, reveals that "equipment has been developed to use lowlying clouds as a screen off which to bounce huge propaganda shows. Tape recordings of primitive gods have been prepared, to be played from helicopters, thus frightening tribes."

During the Vietnam war a U.S. military unit called the 4th Psyop Group invented an image projector called the Mitralux. It used eighty-five-millimeter slides and a 1,000-watt bulb to project pictures on buildings, mountains, and cloud banks.

I believe that it is imperative for scientists to study UFOs. But we should not do it naively. With the progress of human technology, it has become impossible to study any UFO report without considering the possibility of a deliberate deception along with all the other classical hypotheses.

Many UFO groups are gullible to any rumor that seems to support the extraterrestrial credo, without seriously investigating where the rumor comes from and who may have an interest in spreading it.

The skeptical zeal of some of the more vocal debunkers is also inspired by the need to maintain political control. To prevent genuine scientific study from being organized, all that is needed is to maintain a certain threshold of ridicule around the phenomenon. This can be done easily enough by a few influential science writers, under the guise of humanism or rationalism. UFO research is equated by them with "false science," thus creating an atmosphere of guilt by association, which is deadly to any independent scientist. Efforts are made to systematically discredit professional researchers who investigate the phenomenon.

This history of the interaction between flying-saucer contact and politics goes back to the early California contactees. In those days, many occult groups linked to power-hungry organizations were extremely active. Right after World War II, when a branch of Aleister Crowley's neo-Templar cult flourished in Los Angeles, two of the most ardent members were Jack W. Parsons, a propulsion engineer, and L. Ron Hubbard, a science-fiction buff. Jack Parsons claimed to have met a Venusian in the desert in 1946 and went on to be one of the founders of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and of the Aerojet Corporation,

although JPL may deny the connection. L. Ron Hubbard went on to found Dianetics and Scientology.

According to my information, contactee George Adamski had prewar connections with American fascist leader William Dudley Pelley, who was interned during the war. Another seminal contactee, George Hunt Williamson (whose real name was Michel d'Obrenovic), was associated with Pelley's organization in the early fifties. In fact, Pelley may have put Williamson in touch with Adamski.

Other associates of Williamson during the great era of the flying saucers were such contactees as John McCoy and the two Stanford brothers, Ray and Rex.

The connections among all these men, who have been very influential in shaping the UFO myth in the United States, are quite intricate. William Dudley Pelley, who died in 1965, was the leader of the Silver Shirts, an American Nazi group that began its activities about 1932. Its membership overlapped strongly with Guy Ballard's I Am movement. Pelley declined to join the other fascist groups in their support for Congressman Lemke in 1936, standing on his own in Indiana as a Christian Party candidate. His opposition to Roosevelt increased until his eight-year internment for sedition in 1942. After the war, he started an occult group, Soulcraft, and published a racist magazine called Valor. He also wrote the book Star Guests in 1950, a compilation of automatic writing reminiscent of the Seth Material.

It was about 1950 that Williamson is said to have begun working for Pelley at the offices of Soulcraft Publications in Noblesville, Indiana, before moving to California, where he witnessed Adamski's desert contact on November 20, 1952, with a Venusian that had long blond hair.

Williamson, however, has assured me that he never embraced any of the racist theories that the pro-Nazi movements promoted. Perhaps Adamski and Pelley knew one another as a result of their common interest in the I Amcult? Dr. Laughead, who inspired the contacts of Mrs. Keech in the Midwest and later launched Dr. Andrija Pucharich on the tracks of the mythic "Spectra," is also said to have associated with this group.

John McCoy, who coauthored with Williamson the book UFOs Confidential,

operated the Essene Press. He introduced the idea that the Jewish banker conspiracy was involved in the UFO problem.

The Stanford brothers were living in the same Texas town (Corpus Christi) as McCoy was, and in the mid-1950s they produced a series of contact books, one of which listed McCoy as coauthor.

The Stanford's book, Look Up! , acknowledges "all those who helped in preparation of this book and the people of other planets who made the contacts described." Ray Stanford states that in December 1954 he recieved "a very distinct telepathic message from the space people," and he adds, During 1955 I also had a personal contact with two space men... the contacts were not very frequent during 1955 and the first six months of 1956, but beginning in June 1956, things really started popping.

Their book includes many allusions to impending social change, and it encourages the readers to prepare themselves:

If we desire to prepare for future changes to occur on Earth, not merely for the sake of physical survival, but rather to be able to further serve in more adequate ways than ever before, there are definite things we must understand.

Among these lessons is the realization that science is inadequate, according to the Stanfords: Man incessantly on Earth has tried by science and other methods of investigation to go from effect to cause in solving problems. The Brothers and Masters of our own planet tell us that we must look within.

Today Rex Stanford has become a "scientific" parapsychologist, and Ray, in a reversal of his earlier position about the inadequacy of science, operates a UFO detection station using donated electronic equipment. Installed in Austin, Texas, the organization now uses an apparently "scientific" approach to the identification of UFOs.

I find some curious analogies between the statements of these contactee organizations and those of Bob Barry, the director of the Twentieth Century UFO Bureau, headquartered in Collingswood, New Jersey. The Bureau is one of the groups that compose the fundamentalist religious organization headed by the Reverend Carl McIntire. Barry stated in June 1978 that he had three

excellent sources, one in government, the others retired from highly sensitive positions, who asserted that the government was quite concerned with the UFO problem and had recovered a total of eighteen bodies after UFO crashes. An interesting belief of Mr. Barry's is that the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind was part of a government plan to condition the public. "The plan in this country is on schedule," Barry said in an interview with Edgar Williams of the Knight News Service. "Three years ago it was decided to do TV documentaries and observe public reaction."

Some of the believers insist that the movie by Alan Sandler Productions,UFOs: Past, Present, and Future, could have been such a test. Barry observes that reaction was good: So the next step was the film Close Encounters. Now, in a little while there doubtless will be the beginning of government advisories that UFOs are indeed with us.

Since I was a narrator of the Sandler documentary and, indirectly, a contributor to Close Encounters, I found these remarks interesting.

Everyone is now so eager to see the government "reveal" this long-awaited information that no one questions the reality of the basic facts and the political motivations that could inspire a manipulation of those facts. Trying to outsmart the CIA and the Pentagon has become such a national pastime that lawsuits against federal agencies under the Freedom of Information Act have begun to accumulate.

All that has been shown so far is that these agencies were involved – often covertly – in many aspects of the UFO problem. I suspect that they are still involved. Discovering the secret of the UFO propulsion mechanism could be such a military breakthrough that any research project connected with it would enjoy the highest level of classification. But these UFO enthusiasts who are so anxious to expose the government have not reflected that they may be playing into the hands of a more sophisticated coverup of the real situation.

Because of their eagerness to believe any indication that the authorities already possess the proof of UFO reality, many enthusiasts provide an ideal conduit for anyone wishing to spread the extraterrestrial gospel. The purpose of such an exercise need not be complex or strategically important. It could be something as mundane as a political diversion, or a test of the reliability of information

channels under simulated crisis conditions, or a decoy for paramilitary operations.

None of these rumors is likely to lead us any closer to a solution that can only be obtained by careful, intelligent, and perhaps tedious scientific research. The truth is that the UFOs may not be spacecraft at all. And the government may simply be hiding the fact that, in spite of the billions of dollars spent on air defense, it has no more clues to the nature of the phenomenon today than it did in the forties when it began its investigations.

## 9. The Case Against Extraterrestrials

Jumping to Conclusions

A fisherman from Mississippi, who has been subjected to lie-detector tests six times, faces the nation on prime-time TV. Seated between Dr. Carl Sagan and an astronaut, he describes the two robots who came down to take him into the UFO. There was a big machine with an eye, and it examined him. The fisherman has been interrogated by an engineer, an amateur hypnotist who assures us that the experience was real. A UFO "expert," having interviewed the witness in a room full of screaming reporters, has seen the truthfulness of his reactions by the light of their flashbulbs.

This is what America is being told – and it happens to be what America wants to hear.

This man, we are asked to believe, is adding to the knowledge we have of other worlds. Jumping to conclusions, my ufologist friends are cross-indexing his every sentence, adding final touches to the consistent picture they are painting of extraterrestrial life. In their view there is no room for doubt: this fisherman seated beside a famous scientist, now making small talk with the astronaut (who, by the way, has also seen a UFO), has obviously observed the landing of a spacecraft, and has been abducted by its robot occupants. Or did he?

The time has come to challenge this statement. I do not need the results of a lie-detector test to know the witness is describing what he saw. But I don't buy the story that he saw a spacecraft from another planet.

Challenging the Spacecraft Theory

The study of UFOs is very much like American politics in one respect: there are only two parties you can join. In politics, you can be only a Democrat or a Republican. In ufology, either you are a debunker who doesn't believe in UFOs at all or you agree they are spacecraft from another planet.

But are these necessarily the only two possibilities? If UFOs are real, is it

obvious that they are spacecraft?

For many years the best reports of unexplained sightings were of disks that appeared to be metallic, of large size, and capable of fantastic acceleration. They frequently disappeared by going straight up out of the witness's view, suggesting that they were going home to another planet. Their occupants were wearing diving suits and walked awkwardly. The French press of 1954, for instance, was full of reports about "the robots" and "the Martians." The consensus among UFO researchers in the 1960s, including myself, was that we were probably dealing with space visitors. The idea, at the time, was revolutionary. Scientists like Carl Sagan pointed out that space visitations, if they occurred at all, would be very rare. Other scientists, like Donald Menzel, rejected the whole idea, because even the nearest stars are too far away for interstellar travel to be feasible, even at high speed. Sagan's and Menzel's arguments are valid only if one assumes that their science has not superseded in any fundamental way the limitations of our own science, that they have found no means of propagating information faster than the speed of light, and that they are using the same concept of spacetime as we are. In fact, we can make no such assumption about a space civilization. It could have had many centuries of development beyond our own science. Also, they could be a lot smarter.

The real question is, does the "spacecraft" hypothesis explain to our satisfaction the facts of the UFO phenomenon as we know them today?The answer is a definite and resounding no. The contactees and their friends will challenge this answer in many ways: "What about the messages we are receiving through 'channels' and through automatic writing, assuring us that the vehicles come from other worlds? What about our own observations of landings in deserts and remote areas? What about the strange scars left on the bodies of the abductees who remember being medically examined aboard the craft?"

And what about the evidence of the "star map" seen by contactee Betty Hill aboard the UFO that abducted her? What about the thousands of reports of landings that have been made around the entire world? Let us examine closely this so-called evidence.

There Are Too Many Landings

The first argument against the idea of flying saucers as spacecraft lies, oddly enough, in the large number of verified, unexplained sightings. In my own files I have selected approximately two thousand documented cases of close encounters from every country on earth, many of them involving occupants of various sizes and shapes. It may seem that two thousand cases in some twenty years is not a very large number, but we are talking only about the cases that were actually reported. It is possible to calculate how many landings this represents if, as the contactees claim, UFOs are spacecraft whose occupants happened to be surprised by witnesses who wandered onto the scene as the craft was being repaired or as the crew was conducting some exploration of our planet. To make this estimation we must take into account three factors: the time of the sighting, the probability that it will be reported, and the place of the event.

Most landings are reported to take place after 6:00 P.M. The frequency distributions my computer studies have disclosed for every continent show this activity peaking at about 10:30 P.M., decreasing sharply after that time, and increasing again just before dawn. There are few reports after 6:00 A.M. What could this mean? That the activity of the objects is nocturnal by nature and by choice. Then why do the reports decrease in frequency around midnight? Simply because people go to bed: after 10:30 P.M. the number of potential witnesses is severely reduced. Then let us ask how many reports would we have if people did not go to bed but stayed outside to watch these so-called spacecraft. The answer is about thirty thousand. We would have to multiply the number of cases by a factor of fifteen, and the actual peak would then be between 1:00 and 3:00 A.M.

Now, this last figure does not begin to approximate the actual number of events, because we know from many independent studies that only one case in ten ever gets reported. Then we should have not thirty thousand but three hundred thousand cases in our files! But this still isn't the whole story: most landings occur in unpopulated areas, away from dwellings. If the earth's population were distributed evenly instead of being concentrated in city areas, how many reports would we have?

Again, taking a conservative multiplying factor of ten leads us to the staggering conclusion that the UFOs, if they are spacecraft engaged in a general survey of

our planet, must have landed here no fewer than three million times in two decades! [I first reported this finding ten years ago in a paper delivered before the American Institute of Aeronautics and astronautics. This "law of the times" has now been verified by other researchers in various countries, and the total number of estimated landings has been repeatedly confirmed.]

This number is totally absurd. Using a single probe the size of a beer keg in orbit a thousand miles above the earth, human technology as it exists today would be able to capture in a few weeks most of the important facts about the planet's geography, weather, vegetation, and culture. Given the earth's abundant emission of radio and television programs for the last fifty years, even the deployment of such a space probe might be unnecessary.

This is one of the little-recognized facts of the UFO problem that any theory has yet to explain. The theory of random visitation does not explain it. Either the UFOs select their witnesses for psychological or sociological reasons, or they are something entirely different from space vehicles.

In either case, their appearances are staged!

The Super Physics of the UFOs

The following unexplained sightings have been extracted from dozens of similar cases in my files.

March 1954, Santa Maria, Brazil. A man observed two occupants of a football-shaped craft who spoke in a strange language. The craft vanished silently and instantly.

June 1962, Verona, Italy. Following a UFO observation, a woman was awakened by a feeling of intense cold and saw a being with a bald head near the house. She called other witnesses, and all saw the apparition shrink and vanish on the spot "like a TV image when the set is turned off."

October 1963, Whidbey Island, Washington State. A middle-aged woman saw a strange craft with three figures inside. It tilted, partially sank into the ground, grew in size, and departed with a flash.

November 1968, France. A doctor saw two large disk-shaped objects merge into one, and the single object sent a beam of light in his direction. It vanished with a sort of explosion, leaving a cloud that dissipated slowly.

Consider what these sightings have in common. In each case the so-called spacecraft did not disappear by moving away, even at high speed. It simply vanished on the spot, or it slowly faded away like the Cheshire cat, sometimes leaving behind a whitish cloud, sometimes also producing the sound of an explosion. In other cases, UFOs have been reported to enter the ground.

I hardly need to point out that this behavior is contrary to what physical objects do and quite impossible to duplicate with our current spacecraft technology. It is the behavior of an image, or a holographic projection. Yet at other times the objects have left material traces. There may be a machine involved, but a machine that remains out of view of the witnesses, who see only what it is projecting. When we go to the movies, we look at the objects and the people on the screen; we do not stare at the projector. Besides, a single physical machine (a camera) can trigger millions of similar experiences in the people who watch the resulting film projection.

Most witnesses are not primarily reporting an object or a craft; they are reporting a light, a massive, multicolored, intense, pulsating light, a playful, fascinating, impressive, hypnotic light that is accompanied by strange sounds. In other words, UFOs may be unidentified, but they are not flying, as birds and airplanes fly, and they do not always behave as material objects.

How much do we know from the avilable scientific literature about the effects of strong, pulsed, colored lights and other electromagnetic radiations, such as microwaves and gamma rays, on the human brain and on the major nerves? Pitifully little. Until this area is fully explored, we will only have a poor understanding of the physics of UFOs.

## The Absurd Humanoids

Contactees tell us they have met the denizens of other planets. In some cases the beings turned out to be robots or dwarfs in diving suits, but in most incidents they were humanoid, and they could breathe our air. They walked normally on our planet. In a variety of sightings they were accompanied by

human beings. Occasionally, the occupants were completely human and spoke human languages. The same applies to elves and angels, to sylphs and to jinn.

However, visitors from outer space would not be human in shape. They would certainly not breathe our air (for fear of viruses, even if they were adapted to the atmosphere's chemical composition).

They might have serious problems with the earth's gravity. They would not fit within our culture.

We would not recognize the emotions on their faces.

You can push these objections aside and argue that the visitors are advanced enough in genetic manipulation to have "grown" or cloned humanoid pilots for their spacecraft. Perhaps they have even kidnapped humans to breed space children destined to become saucer-crew members. But even these outlandish assumptions fail to explain the facts.

Within twenty-five years our own biological science will be able to reliably alter the characteristics of human beings. We will create enhanced humans adapted to special conditions, such as life in outer space. Wouldn't we expect the UFO occupants to do the same, rather than adopting the human shape which is far from representing a biological optimum? Consider the following case.

Temple, Oklahoma, March 23, 1966. An instructor in aircraft electronics at Sheppard Air Force Base was driving to work at 5:00 A.M. on Route 65 and approached the intersection with Highway 70. I interviewed him over the telephone.

"One mile before the intersection I saw a very bright light a mile or so to my right, and I supposed it was a truck having trouble on the highway. I went on to turn west on Highway 70. I went a quarter of a mile or so, and changed my mind and thought that it was a house that was being moved down the highway in the early morning hours."

"Did you seem to be getting closer to it all the time?"

"Yes, sir. It was parked on the highway and I got within a hundred yards of it

and stopped, got out of the car, and started trotting towards the object, leaving the car lights on and my engine running. I got about fifteen steps or so, and I happened to think I had a Kodak on the front seat, and I would like to get a picture. I hesitated just a second, and while I did, why, this man that was dressed in military fatigues, which I thought was a master sergeant... this insignia was on his right arm, and he had a kind of cap with a bill turned up, weighed approximately 180 pounds and about 5'9"...."

"He looked perfectly ordinary?"

"Oh, yes, he was just a plain old G.I. mechanic... or a crew chief or whatever he might happen to be on that crew. He had a flashlight in his hand, and he was almost kneeling on his right knee, with his left hand touching the bottom of the fuselage."

The object looked like an aluminum airliner with no wings or tail and with no seams along the fuselage. It lifted up vertically for about fifty feet and headed southeast almost straight backward, off by about ten degrees, at a speed estimated to be about 720 mph, judging by the barns it illuminated along its path across the valley. It was the size of a cargo plane, but had no visible means of propulsion. The witness was grilled by a roomful of officers at the Air Force base. A truck driver down the road had observed the same object.

Whoever he was, the man in the baseball cap was no interplanetary explorer. This is only one of many sightings in which the pilots are described as ordinary humans. Whatever they are, the occupants of such craft are not genuine extraterrestrials.

A Star Map to Nowhere

Many UFO investigators have become very excited in recent years because a witness of obvious sincerity, Mrs. Betty Hill, had described what was believed to be a star map used by our mysterious visitors. These investigators are convinced that the map she saw inside the "flying saucer" had guided the pilots to our solar system. This proves, they argue, that we are in fact being visited by a race of space explorers.

In my opinion it proves nothing of the kind. Betty's drawing is a map to

nowhere. If there is some intelligence involved, Betty's map may even be another deliberate attempt to lead us astray, or a sophisticated symbol pointing to a higher level of the truth.

I have told how a psychiatrist took Betty and Barney Hill back to the instant of the incident by using regressive hypnosis. They both described a scene they could not remember consciously: the car was stopped, eerie dwarf-like men in black uniforms took control of them, and they were taken inside the flying sacuser for a medical examination.

Barney Hill is dead now. He suffered a cerebral hemorrhage at forty-six. Betty has become a UFO

celebrity and a rallying point for the believers in extraterrestrial visitation. She has done more than any other UFO witness to spread among the American public a belief in space visitors. Several ufologists have now claimed that the home base of these visitors has been identified: they come from a planet circling a star, Zeta Reticuli, in the southern constellation Reticulus.

This is by no means the first time that the supposed origin of "flying saucers" has been revealed, either by the ufonauts themselves or by deduction from the words of the witnesses. In each case the witness seems genuinely sincere and believes in the "revelations." But in each case these revelations contradict what all the other contactees are saying.

The history of such identification goes back to the days of the 1897 airship, whose occupants invited witnesses to come with them to "a place where it doesn't rain." As noted earlier, on one occasion, asked where they were from, the strange pilots replied: "We're from anywhere, but we shall be in Greece tomorrow!" Another occupant mentioned Cuba.

On July 23, 1947, near Pitanga, Brazil, a group of surveyors saw a disk-shaped craft land near them.

One of them, Jose G. Higgins, saw three beings in shiny clothes and translucent suits emerge from the saucer. They were two meters tall, had oversized bald heads, huge round eyes, no eyelashes or eyebrowns, and wore a metal box on their backs. They drew the solar system for the benefit of the witness and

pointed to Uranus as if to indicate they came from there.

In 1952 a man named Truman Bethurum met space beings who claimed they originated from Clarion, a planet hidden from us by the sun.

In a radio interview and in conversations with me, a contactee named "Jim" has identified the home base of the saucers as Orion:

The entities of light that appeared in energy form said they were from the constellation we call Orion, and they were here to prepare us to interconnect with the next level of universal intelligence.

On November 2, 1966, a salesman named Darenberger saw a dark object ahead of him on the road as he was driving home to Parkersburg, West Virginia. A man of dark complexion came out of the strange flying machine and approached him. The man was dressed in a blue shirt and blue trousers and gave the witness a message saying he came from another world called Lanulos.

On September 4, 1967, in Latin America, a police officer named Andrade saw a dwarf wearing silver coveralls near a hovering disk. He pointed his machine gun at the creature, but a voice came from the object and ordered him not to use the weapon. The dwarf then attempted to convince Andrade to come to his world, which was "very distant and much larger than the earth, with many advantages for earthlings."

Let us not forget the Ummo affair, which I described in an earlier book. A complex series of messages allegedly coming from a "Cosmic Federation of Planets" has been recieved by people in Spain and in France. These messages from Ummo claim to give full details on the origin and civilization of our visitors:

We wish to inform planet Earth of our origin and of the purpose of our visit to you. We come from UMMO, a planet that rotates around the star IUMMA, recorded on your Earth under the designation Wolf 424.

The mysterious beings even provided a map of Ummo and details of its atmospheric composition!

In recent years Colonel Wendell Stevens has promoted lurid reports of contact with UFOs from the Pleiades and a variety of other places (the Pleiades are young blue stars, very unlikely to have planets with life on them).

Finally, Uri Geller has stated that his powers come from a form of consciousness emanating from "Hoova," and Spanish contactee Jacques Bordas believes that the strange being he saw was from Titan. Thus, we have a bewildering multitude of "revelations" of the saucers' point of origin!

An Ohio schoolteacher named Marjorie Fish added another chapter to this quest by constructing a model of known sun-like stars and matching it to a map that Betty Hill saw inside the flying saucer.

It is this model that indicates to many UFO believers that the saucer which abducted the Hills hailed from Zeta Reticuli.

Marjorie Fish visited Betty in 1969 to get information about the map. Betty told her that she drew the map under post-hypnotic suggestion in 1964. She remembered it as a flat, thin display giving an impression of depth. Since she didn't move while viewing it, she couldn't tell whether it was truly three-dimensional or just flat like a television screen. It was about three feet by two feet and showed many stars.

Ms. Fish cleverly investigated this pattern by compiling a list of all the known stars within 55 light years of the sun that are good candidates for supporting life, according to currently accepted cosmological theory. These are stars that are neither too hot nor too cold, that do not vary in brightness, and that rotate slowly, the slow rotation being necessary if the stars are to have planets around them. There are forty-six such stars.

Marjorie Fish went on to build models of the positions of these stars by using beads dangling on threads and looked for "suspicious alignments." Finally she exhibited a configuration of sixteen stars that was very similar to the Hill map when seen from a particular viewing angle.

An astronomy professor at Ohio State, Walter Mitchell, has recreated the model by using a computer and has stated that he was "impressed." In many lectures around the country, UFO researchers have shown slides of the model

and the original map and have shown audiences the resemblance, implying that UFOs were real spacecraft originating on Zeta Reticuli. People I have spoken to after such lectures came away with the feeling that the whole UFO mystery had at last been solved. Yet, I believe they are mistaken.

Recognizing that the witness is sincere and that the analyst is accurate, we still have two very important problems before us. It is appalling to find that no one has raised them and that UFO "investigators" have been so eager to jump to a sensational conclusion on the basis of the evidence presented. The two questions we must ask are: (1) from how many positions in space can we look at the forty-six-star model and find as good a match with the original map? and (2) once we find a good match, or even a "best" match, does that necessarily tell us anything about the origin of UFOs?

The question posed to the computer was the wrong one. Given the stars in the model and the viewpoint chosen by Marjorie Fish, the computer was bound to display the same pattern that she had already found with her beads and threads. It would be a lot more interesting to ask the computer to place itself in succession at each of the millions of possible space viewpoints and to calculate how many would give a good fit to the original map. To do this would require some definition of "goodness" and a lot of patience – not to mention a lot of computer time. We would probably generate a list of many points in space from which sixteen of the forty-six stars form a pattern closely resembling the Hill map. Zeta Reticuli may or may not be significant when these results are sorted out. Clearly this experiment hasn't been done.

What if a perfect match were found? What if it identified Zeta Reticuli as the hub of the star pattern? This would still not be a proof of the spatial origin of our visitors. A crucial fact seem to have escaped the attention of those who have examined Betty Hill's drawing: her map is not drawn to scale! The size of the stars – if the Fish interpretation is correct – does not correspond to their brightness. The distance between the two stars of Zeta Reticuli, in particular, is exaggerated to the point where the map would be useless for navigation. What could a saucer pilot do with such a map? Why draw it from a viewpoint that doesn't correspond to any known celestial object?

And why use a map at all, for heaven's sake? Even by the standards of our own space technology, we already fly spacecraft by software and telemetry, not by

maps. The object seen by Betty aboard the craft was as ludicrous as a propeller or a rudder would have been. Why not a Westinghouse air brake, as a witness thought he heard on the 1897 airship? Or a whistle? Or a bell? Or a flameless grill? Or a clock whose hands did not move?

If the map was real, it must have been placed there for Betty Hill to see, not for the pilot to use!

Exposing unsuspecting people to staged scenes in order to further a certain belief is an old trick.

During World War II, for example, the British changed all the road signs along the route of a German general who had been captured and who was driven to the coast in an exchange of prisoners. He would thus testify to the German High Command that he had seen tanks, trucks, and barracks in the area where the Allies were assembling a "phantom army" ready to strike northern Europe. This was only one of many deceptions designed to distract the German army away from Normandy.

We can only guess at the purpose of staging such a scene for Betty Hill. Perhaps it served to reinforce her belief that she was dealing with space visitors. Perhaps it diverted her attention away from something else. Perhaps the purpose was to have her convince others that a space invasion was possible. Perhaps, again, it was meant as a symbol of our mistaken understanding of physical dimensions, like the absurd dialogue in other cases. Or was it an impression that came into her consciousness under the stress of the abduction experience?

Pitfalls in the Abduction Data

There are now hundreds of documented claims of abductions – that is, instances when the witness of a close encounter has recalled under hypnosis that he or she was forcibly taken inside a UFO.

Generally, the witness describes one of the standard scenes we have reviewed: some medical examination is performed and instruments are inserted into the human patient, often causing trauma or pain. The examination is often gynecological in nature, culminating in the removal of a woman's fetus in a

case described at lenght by Budd Hopkins, who argues that all this points to an extraterrestrial race trying to enrich itself or even to preserve its future through biogenetic engineering.

Evidence that such encounters are real is allegedly provided by scars on the witnesses' bodies and by the missing time in their conscious recollection of the events surrounding the abduction, which is only clearly remembered under hypnosis. The granddaddy of all abductions cases remains the Betty and Barney Hill episode of 1961.

The abduction data are obviously of the greatest interest. The information is usually presented in the UFO literature (for example, in John Fuller'sInterrupted Journey, or in Budd Hopkin's Intruders) as the ultimate argument in favor of the extraterrestrial theory. The abductions are said to provide us with the missing motive of the coming of the UFOs: they need human specimens to study our race, not only to understand us but to interbreed with us, to provide new genetic material for their own survival.

The parallel between these modern claims and the medieval legends is closer than ever. The same theory was presented about intercourse with the elves. I have shown that fairy tales are full of stories about the stealing of human babies, changelings, and the abduction of both males and females for procreation with the Gentry. Even the scars sound familiar. Budd Hopkins and scores of other ufologists carefully examine UFO witnesses for unexplained scars or marks that might indicate they were victims of an abduction (perhaps one they cannot recall consciously).

Throughout the Middle Ages priests and inquisitors similarly examined the bodies of people suspected of having attended the sabbat of the witches. The proof of such supernatural contact was a scar or a mark. The authorities went to great extremes to find it and were usually successful: what normal individual doesn't have a scar whose origin is forgotten or unexplainable? Many of these alleged witches were tortured and burned at the stake.

What does it all mean? Let us forget that the hypnosis, in the majority of cases, has been poorly performed, under the leadership of untrained practitioners or even of rank amateurs. Let us ignore the leading questions, the preconceptions about the answers, the extreme suggestibility of the witnesses subjected to such

unscientific practices. The skeptics and the debunkers will have a field day with these obvious flaws, and for once I agree with them. But let us forget these problems and take all the material at face value. Do we obtain a picture that suggests extraterrestrial contact with advanced visitors? My answer is an emphatic no. I asked earlier: what kind of spacecraft pilots are these, if they still have to use maps to navigate? Now I have to ask: what kind of doctors are these, who need to induce such trauma in hundreds of patients to collect a little blood, a few embryos?

Any doctor today can draw one cubic centimeter of blood without leaving a scar or a mark. From the analysis we could determine if the patient used to have a Siamese cat as a pet when he was six years old! Molecular biology, a science in its infancy, is already capable of providing incredible amounts of information from minute amounts of human cells. In vitro fertilization has reached a level such that the so-called genetic experiments allegedly performed aboard UFOs seem ludicrous and grotesque. The ufonauts should go back to medical school.

Using the advanced paralyzing devices they possess, it should be simple for them, if they were an extraterrestrial task force, to raid the blood bank of any modern research hospital where they would also find collections of frozen embryos at various stages of development. And what kind of psychologists are they, if any amateur hypnotist can readily uncover from the witness the details of an abduction that was supposed to be totally erased from his or her mind? We have mind control drugs that ensure permanent, selective memory loss. Wouldn't smart extraterrestrials know as much?

In my view, the interaction remembered by the witnesses, if it was a real occurrence, should be treated at the symbolic level. It does not tell us anything about the extraterrestrial origin of the beings, and the idea that they must perform such experiments to enrich their race is merely another contribution to the absurd character of the entire phenomenon.

Emerging fully armed into our local universe, the UFOs provide the physical support for our own dreams. We do the rest. Our brains erect a ladder of symbols toward the darkened skies where the strange machines hover, and we meet them more than halfway across the bridge of their strangeness – perhaps because we vaguely percieve that their irresistible, pathetic adventure is

closely related to our own. But the extraterrestrial theory is not good enough, because it is not strange enough to explain the facts.

## 10. The Control System

Contact or Control

After forty years of puzzlement, we have plenty of data to document the impact of the UFO phenomenon on our society. We have only to look around us and examine the shift that takes place right now in human mythologies. We need only observe to what extent the subject of contact with extraterrestrial life has become fashionable. We are as likely to find mention of it today in the arguments of the scientists as in the statements of the fortune tellers. At one end of the academic spectrum, our radio astronomers suggest that we ought to listen to the stars to decipher in the galactic noise the possible murmur of newly born societies or the wise warnings of long disappeared cultures. Astronomer Carl Sagan, long a UFO debunker, recently published a novel called Contact. At the other end of the spectrum, Jeanne Dixon is quoted by a tabloid (which calls her "the best psychic in the U.S.") as prophesying an imminent change in our understanding of UFOs, "and it will bring great benefit to Mankind," she says.

According to an interview with Dixon published in May 1974, the UFOs are flown by women pilots and come from a planet located beyond Jupiter but still undiscovered: "The people in the UFOs are interested in us, but have avoided contacting us until now because we have not been mentally ready."

As a society, we are developing a great thirst for contact with superior minds that will provide guidance for our poor, harassed, hectic planet. I think we may be ready to fall into a trap, perhaps a kind, benevolent pitfall. I believe that when we speak of UFO sightings as instances of space visitations we are looking at the phenomenon on the wrong level. We are not dealing with successive waves of visitations from space. We are dealing with a control system.

The thermostats that regulate your house temperature summer and winter are an example of a control system. In summer, a thermostat allows the air to get warmer until a certain limit is reached, and then the cooling system is triggered. But in winter, when the outside atmosphere turns cold and the temperature drops below another limit, a different mechanism, the heater,

comes into play and warms the house. A naive observer might try to explain all this by assuming that warm is "good" and cold is "bad." He or she would be right half the time. Another naive observer of the opposite school might take a reversed view and decide that warm is "evil." He or she would also be right half the time. To understand the whole phenomenon one needs a grasp of the control concept, and one must be ready to understand that it needs two opposite principles for its function.

I propose that there is a spiritual control system for human consciousness and that paranormal phenomena like UFOs are one of its manifestations. I cannot tell whether this control is natural and spontaneous; whether it is explainable in terms of genetics, of social psychology, or of ordinary phenomena – or if it is artificial in nature, under the power of some superhuman will. It may be entirely determined by laws that we have not yet discovered.

I am led to this idea by the fact that, in every instance of the UFO phenomenon I have been able to study in depth, I have found as many rational elements as absurd ones, as many that I could call friendly as I could call hostile. This is what tells me that we are working on the wrong level. And so are all the believers, and this definitely includes the skeptics, because they believe they can explain the facts as strongly as the most enthusiastic convert to Ms. Dixon's vision of Jupiterian Amazons!

There are ways to gain access to the reference level of every control system. Even a child, if smart or daring enough, can climb on a chair, change the dial of a thermostat, and elicit a response. (The response in question might be a sound spanking from his father, of course. The road to higher knowledge has such accidents.) It must be possible to gain access to the control of the UFO phenomenon, to forget the spirits and the pranks and the claims of extraterrestrial contact, and do some real science. But it will take a very smart approach – and a very daring one.

A Schedule of Reinforcement

Psychologist B. F. Skinner has shown under what conditions an organism reacting to an external phenomenon learns a new behavior. We also know under what conditions this learning is irreversible. These conditions are precisely similar to the pattern that the UFO phenomenon has been following

over the years – intense activity followed by quiet periods when it seems to have gone away entirely. Is it trying to teach us something? With every new wave of sightings, the social impact becomes greater. More people become fascinated with space, with new frontiers in consciousness. More books and articles appear, changing our culture in the direction of a new image of man.

Skinner has been working for half a century to study behavior and the process of modifying it. His experiments, which are hotly debated, have centered on observations of rats, pigeons, and other animals placed in reinforcement situations. (I am indebted to Mr. Fred Beckman of the University of Chicago and to Professor Douglas Price-Williams of UCLA for the suggestion that these researches might have a bearing on a discussion of human reactions to UFOs.) The technological use of schedules of reinforcement is rapidly expanding.... Techniques involving schedules have been adapted to a wide range of species. Surprisingly similar performances, particularly under complex schedules, have been demonstrated in organisms as diverse as the pigeon, mouse, rat, dog, cat and monkey. At the human level the analysis of schedules has proved useful in the study of psychotic behavior and in the design of educational techniques for normal human subjects.... Other applications to the problem of the control of human behavior, as in law and penology, religion, industry, and commerce, offer considerable promise.

The above appears in a highly technical volume called Patterns of Reinforcement by Charles Ferster and B. F. Skinner reporting on research sponsored by the Office of Naval Research.

Although the design of their experiments is complex, the findings of Ferster and Skinner can be summarized in a few lines. Drastic modification of the behavior of an animal (including man) can be achieved by selectivly reinforcing certain actions, for instance by giving food to a pigeon only when he presses a certain lever. However, certain ways of reinforcing behavior lead to better learning than others. If the training is too even and monotonous, the subject may stop in its development or even return to an earlier state. The best schedule of reinforcement is one that combines periodicity with unpredictability. Learning is then slow but continuous. It leads to the highest level of adaption. And it is irreversible. It is interesting to observe that the pattern of UFO waves has the same structure as a schedule of reinforcement.

A newspaper column commented upon the apparent lack of reality of the whole UFO phenomenon: "It does not attack us. It does not affect our daily lives. It does not help us with our many problems.

It has brought us nothing of value. It may have scared a few folks here and there, but then so do thunder storms and tornadoes. The whole thing, as a social issue, is of no consequence whatsoever."

The journalist who wrote this column was superficially right, of course. But he forgot another fact: human life is not ruled by the juxtaposition of problem-solving exercises. Human life is ruled by imagination and myth; these obey strict laws and they, too, are governed by control systems, although admittedly not of the hardware type. If UFOs are acting at the mythic and spiritual level it will be almost impossible to detect it by conventional methods.

If UFO activity operates in a fashion similar to Skinner's reinforcement, which is the least amenable to extinction, then the learning will take time but it will never be forgotten. And we may never meet our teachers.

How can we verify whether such conditioning is in fact operating? We should firmly establish the primary effects. We should go on analyzing landing traces, interviewing witnesses and "abductees," feeding computers with sighting details, and scrutinizing the heavens with cameras and radio telescopes. But this activity will be completely useless if it is not related to an investigation of the secondary impact, the shift in our worldview that the phenomenon produces. A phenomenon that denies itself, that annihilates evidence of itself, cannot be mastered by engineering brute force. If the logic of the UFO phenomenon is a metalogic, it is not useful to gather in the evenings around a spoon a psychic has bent and wait in the dark for cosmic messages. More kitchen utensils will certainly become useless, and there will be cosmic messages, to be sure! But any expectation of higher wisdom will be soon brought to naugh by their insane incoherence or their calculated fallacy.

If the phenomenon is forcing us through a learning curve, then it has no choice but to mislead us.

When Skinner designs a machine that feeds a rat only when the right lever is depressed, this is extremely misleading for the rat. But if the rat doesn't

depress the correct lever, he becomes extremely hungry. Man is hungry for knowledge and power, and if there is an intelligence behind the UFOs it must have taken this fact into account. We also tend to forget that we have no choice either: we must eventually study UFOs, and that study, unavoidably, will in turn contribute to the reinforcement itself.

A civilization such as ours, which is oriented toward what it regards as technical progress, cannot afford long to ignore the apparition in the sky of objects that defy the laws of its physics and the performance of its rocket planes. Within a few years, the advanced countries will place on this problem, openly or in secret, their best physicists, their best intelligence specialists, their best computer scientists. As I mentioned at the beginning of this book, the Star Wars defense project makes a study of UFOs a top-priority task. But our scientists may be powerless to utilize their expertise, because the phenomenon fits none of the usual categories. UFOs cannot be analyzed through the standard research techniques, if they are the means through which man's concepts are being rearranged. All we can do is trace their effects on humans, and hope that we will eventually stumble on some principle that explains their behavior.

What is the variable being controlled in this control system? Thermostats control temperature; gyroscopes control the direction in which a rocket flies. What could a paranormal phenomenon control? I suggest that it is human belief that is being controlled and conditioned.

Myth and Civilization

My speculation is that a level of control of society exists which is a regulator of human development, and that the UFO phenomenon should be seen at this level. What would this explain?

It would certainly explain why there is no overt contact. Direct contact would preclude genuine learning. It also explains some of the statements made by ufonauts ("you should believe in us but not too much"; "you will not speak wisely about this night"). It explains the absurdity of many cases, where reactions to the phenomenon may have been evoked in terms of nonverbal consciousness rather than in "logical" terms. This would explain why so many witnesses are incapable of finding words to describe what they have seen. And it would explain the sexual and genetic aspects, which reinforce the signal by

encoding it with the most powerful emotions of which men and women are capable and with the violation of human taboos.

The same idea was arrived at independently by two Soviet science fiction writers, Boris and Arkady Strugatsky, in their delightful novel Definitely Maybe. Faced with a series of weird coincidences and absurd communications aberrations, a group of scientists theorizes that without suspecting it, we've tread on the corns of some supercivilization and it has decided to regulate our progress as it sees fit.

But another scientist in the novel has a different theory: Vecherovsky introduced the concept of the Homeostatic Universe: "the universe retains its structure," that was his fundamental axiom.

When I speak of a spiritual control system I do not mean that some higher supercivilization has locked us inside the constrains of a space-bound jail, closely monitored by entities we might call angels or demons. What I do mean is that mythology rules at a level of our social reality over which normal political and intellectual trends have no real power. At that level, time frames are long and evolution is slow. Mass media, which are designed to give split-second images of transient noise (the noisier the better), miss this signal entirely. A society with an attention span of minutes (the interval between two TV commercial breaks) can have no concept of events that began when my grandfather was not yet born and will end after my grandson dies. But there are such long-term changes. They dominate the destiny of civilizations. Myths define the set of things scholars, politicians, and scientists can think about. They are operated upon by symbols, and the language these symbols form consistutes a complete system. This system is metalogical, but not metaphysical. It violates no laws because it is the substance of which laws are made.

The theory does not explain how UFOs are made to appear to us, although it gives support to one idea about them: that they are constructed both as physical craft (a fact which has long appeared to me undeniable) and as psychic devices whose exact properties remain to be defined. As a focus for psychic phenomena, the UFO evokes a deep emotional reaction in the viewer, but logical development of an investigation is prevented – or precluded – by the apparent violations of causality that surround it and by the sociological climate

that is created. Scientists may be willing to interview witnesses who have seen a landed craft, but they may not wish to talk with the witnesses.

Or a witness may offer as "proof" of his experience a couple of pancakes given to him by extraterrestrials, or a recitation of meaningless messages, or a story of sexual contact with a being from outer space. Pursuit of the rational study of the case is discouraged. The lurid aspects of many such stories make their serious examination improbable, and this in turn reinforces the role of the rumors as secret folklore, rich in new images.

The Next Form of Religion

In the course of twenty-five years of investigation into paranormal phenomena one hears many stories. In the past, I have only published those stories I could authenticate or that I felt met basic criteria of reliability. Beyond these cases, however, a certain number of consistent rumors play a role in the unfolding of the total myth. They involve stories of contact between humans and alleged visitors residing on earth. Some of the descriptions are extremely detailed and have involved scientists as witnesses. Some of the humans associated with the cases are said to have eventually disappeared. A spectrum of experience runs from abduction or contact to the close encounter, to the exposure of humanoids, and, finally, to the reports of aliens among us. I have spent hours with Betty and Barney Hill and have had a chance to discuss the case of their abduction with Dr. Simon. I have spoken at lenght to other abductees like Travis Walton and Herb Schirmer. I have also become acquainted with the stories of people who said they had paranormal faculties and claimed to derive them from UFO contact.

What interests me is not the likelihood of such a contact but the fact that a subculture now exists in every country, based on the idea that humanity has a higher destiny. You will find people in remote towns of California who have literally dropped out of city life (where they had held responsible positions and enjoyed good salaries) because they had recieved messages from space instructing them to do so. Many of the people I am referring to are middle-aged, have families, and work steady jobs. They would be regarded as perfectly ordinary folks if it were not for the fact that their lives have been changed by what they consider to be genuine extraterrestrial communications. They wait. And, a curious fact in the current state of the world, they seem

perfectly happy. We could categorize them among the victims of city pressures who have sought the psychological comfort of small-town life. But we might also wonder whether they are not the forerunners of a new spiritual movement. Are we slipping, as Aime Michel has warned, toward a new age of the irrational?

I know a man who left Los Angeles with his family after a message he believes came from another planet instructed him to find an isolated spot and live in semiretirement, "providing a center of peace in the world of intense turmoil that was to come." He now lives with his wife in a small mountain village, has no television set, reads avidly, and awaits further instructions. He is one of the happiest old people I have met in the United States, a country where one does not find too many happy old people. We are not here dealing with escapism – we are dealing with the next form of religion, with a new spiritual movement.

Why bring all this into the open? Because flying saucers, real or not as objects, clearly introduce a central element in an already troubled future landscape. It would be overly optimistic to predict that they will decrease its dangers. It is nonetheless interesting to ask what will happen to our civilization if the next step in the development of the phenomenon is a massive change of human attitudes toward paranormal abilities and extraterrestrial life.

## The Salvation Myth

A great celebration in San Francisco: a thousand young people, the nucleus of everything psychic and countercultural in northern California, have gathered in a large auditorium. There are booths selling health food, cosmic advice, tantric yoga courses, and consciousness training. A colorful crowd pulsates through the aisles and fills the seminar rooms. The One World Family Commune of Berkeley runs a restaurant. It is directed by Allan the Messiah, wearing an impeccable red uniform and advertising the Everlasting Gospel revealed to him by the saucers. His information indicates that the earth is hollow, with the saucer people inside.

"Do you really believe that?" asks a friend of mine.

"Certainly," Allan replies. "If you were going to make a planet, would you waste all that good dirt?"

I find myself on a panel with Dr. Andrija Puharich, Arthur Young, mathematician Charles Muses (Young and Muses are the two authors of an excellent book called Consciousness and Reality), and an Army scientist, Tom Bearden. Puharich describes his latest experiences with Uri Geller. Puharich explains to the audience that he gets messages on his tape recorder, coming from a mysterious cosmic source. But the tape vanishes regularly. There is nothing he can do to prevent it, and he is totally committed to the idea that he and Uri are now guided by a very high source of wisdom and that the only course for mankind is to place its destiny in "their" hands.

The floor is given another speaker. Humanity, he says, stands on the brink of catastrophe, at the edge of a chasm. How are we to reach the safe side? A flying saucer hovers above the chasm, our only hope: "Do you want a lift?" asks the UFO, helpfully.

This topic is a familiar one in the "New Age" movement. The 1987 celebration of the so-called "Harmonic Convergence" used similar themes.

Salvation from heaven. Shouldn't we know something more about the helpful stranger before we jump on board? Shouldn't we make sure that the chasm is real, and that we cannot bridge it with our own resources? Cannot we reach the other side – our future – by our own means?

When we are asked to suspend all our rational thoughts, to forget our "obsolete" critical faculties, to throw control overboard, then the time has come to take all the data and go away with it to a quiet place to think. My fear is that the problem will not be seriously studied by scientists until it has begun to generate a high degree of public awareness, and then the approach will be an entirely classical one: millions of dollars to consultants and research institutes, thousands of questionnaires, field investigators with glass bottles, sociologists filling out correlation matrices, medical personnel adjusting electrodes over the frontal lobes of ranchers. This would only beanother wrinkle in the learning curve, another step in the conditioning.

There is a strange urge in my mind: I would like to stop behaving as if I am a rat pressing levers – even if I have to give up the cheese and go hungry for a while. I would like to step outside the conditioning maze and see what makes it tick. I wonder what I would find. Perhaps a terrible superhuman monstrosity

the very contemplation of which would make a person insane? Perhaps a solemn gathering of sages? Or the maddening simplicity of unattended clockwork?

## Conclusion: Exploring Other Dimensions

In the first part of this book I have tried to document, as fully and as carefully as I could, the historical record that leads to the modern UFO phenomenon and to the belief in alien contact.

In Part Two we dealt with reports of abduction from various times and various countries and with the psychic and spiritual component of the contact experience.

In Part Three we have built a case for aggressive new research while becoming sharply aware of the factors that inhibit such research: the triple coverup, the political motivations. We have come to realize that we are dealing with a genuine new phenomenon of immense scope. The UFOs are real physical objects. Yet they are not necessarily extraterrestrial spacecraft. To put it bluntly, the extraterrestrial theory is not strange enough to explain the facts. And I will be disappointed if UFOs turn out to be nothing more than visitors from another planet.

What Else Could They Be?

If they are not spacecraft, what else could UFOs be? What research framework can account for the physical effects, for the impact on society, for the appearance of the occupants, and for the seemingly absurd, dreamlike elements of their behavior? How can we explain that the phenomenon makes itself obvious to rural populations but avoids overt contact, choosing instead to deliver its message in bizarre abductions, in highly strange incidents? The theory that suggests itself, as we analyze and reanalyze the forces at play, goes beyond the notion that these are simply technological vehicles produced by advanced races on another planet.

Instead I believe that the UFO phenomenon represents evidence for other dimensions beyond spacetime; the UFOs may not come from ordinary space, but from a multiverse which is all around us, and of which we have stubbornly refused to consider the disturbing reality in spite of the evidence aviable to us for centuries. Such a theory is required in order to explain both the modern cases and the chronicles of Magonia – the abductions and the psychic

component I believe there is a system around us that transcends time as it transcends space. Other researchers have reached the same conclusion. Some have come away deeply discouraged by the realization best summed up early in this century by Charles Fort, the author of The Book of the Damned: "We are property." Scholars of this phenomenon, like Father Salvatore Freixedo in Latin America, John Keel in the United States, and Aime Michel in France, feel that we may be powerless before the complex and absurd capabilities of an alien intelligence that can masquerade as a Martian invader, as a primitive god, as the Blessed Virgin, as a fleet of airships. While I acknowledge their observations I remain confident that human knowledge is capable of eventually understanding the larger reality the phenomenon represents. We should go on studying it – case after bizarre case, pattern after strange pattern.

The system I am speaking of, a system with mastery of space and time dimensions, may well be able to locate itself in outer space. Nonetheless, its manifestations cannot be spacecraft in the ordinary nuts-and-bolts sense. The UFOs are physical manifestations that simply cannot be understood apart from their psychic and symbolic reality. What we see here is not an alien invasion.

It is a spiritual system that acts on humans and uses humans.

In attempting to find an adequate research framework, it is useful to speculate about variants of current physics in which apparent miracles could occur without violating physical laws and in which psychic phenomena should be the rule rather than the exception. In such a physics, UFOs could come from earth without necessarily being human inventions, or they could come from another galaxy without necessarily being spacecraft.

Many theoreticians more qualified than I am are already at work constructing such alternative models. To explain the behavior of elementary particles and the formation of the cosmos, they speculate about "superstrings" and about universes with many dimensions beyond the familiar framework of spacetime.

In their book Beyond Einstein, Dr. Michio Taku and Jennifer Trainer point out that even in current physics one needs five dimensions to explain the Big Bang theory. In 1919 Albert Einstein, who was developing the consequences of general relativity, recieved a letter from a Soviet mathematician named Franz Kaluza, who proposed a five-dimensional theory of gravity. A few weeks later

Einstein wrote to Kaluza: "The formal unity of your theory is startling." Other scientists joined the effort.

Where did the fifth dimension go? In 1926 Swedish mathematician Oskar Klein explained why the world appears to have only four dimensions rather than five by suggesting that the fifth dimension was "curled up" like a circle so small it was beyond observation. Klein even argued that its depth would correspond to the Plank length, which is a hundred billion billion times smaller than the nucleus of an atom. This elegant theory, however, raised more questions than it solved and had to be abandoned.

In 1957 Hugh Everett and John Wheeler of Princeton University proposed a "Many Worlds Interpretation" (MWI) of quantum mechanics. Under that concept, the universe can be viewed as constantly branching through alternate realities.

In recent years, new lines of speculation proved even more fruitful. They assumed an even greater number of dimensions. The most interesting results were produced by the superstring theories, which came into being in the 1970s. The belief today among many theoretical physicists involved in superstring research is that the universe evolved from a ten-dimensional string that was unstable. In the words of Taku and Trainer, "Six dimensions have curled up, leaving our four-dimensional universe intact." Over the decades we can expect this new line of speculation to be challenged, expanded, improved. Paranormal phenomena like UFOs can provide valuable material to this fundamental debate.

Information, Occasions, Spacetime

Another interesting facet of the UFO phenomenon concerns information theory. According to modern physics, and in particular to Brillouin, Bagor, and Roghstein, information and entropy are closely related. The relationship has been expressed clearly by Brillouin: Entropy is generally regarded as expressing the state of disorder of a physical system. More precisely, one can say that entropy measures the lack of information about the true structure of the system.

No information can be obtained in the course of a physical measurement, then,

without changing the amount of entropy in the universe, the state of disorder of the cosmos.

Now the physicist is faced with a new challenge: how to define disorder. And the task, as R.

Schafroth has pointed out, is not easy:

Some scientists pile up papers and books on their shelves in apparent disorder, yet they know perfectly how to find the document they want. If someone restores the appearance of order, the unfortunate owner of these documents may be unable to locate anything. In this case it is obvious that the apparent disorder was in fact order, and vice versa.

Speculating on the relationship between these physical quantities, French physicist Costa de Beauregard wrote, "It must be in the nature of probability to serve as the operational link between objective and subjective, between matter and psychism." He points out that, in precybernetics physics,observation was regarded as a process without mystery, requiring no explanation, whereas free action, on the contrary, was "regarded as a physical impossibility and a psychological illusion."

In modern physics these ideas have been revolutionized.

Most theories advanced to explain paranormal phenomena borrow the standard concepts of space and time dimensions from physics. These concepts seem obsolete to me. They are not appropriate for understanding telepathy, or the moving of objects at a distance, or ghosts, or UFO abductions. I have always been struck also by the fact that energy and information are one and the same thing under two different aspects. Our physics professors teach us this, yet they never draw the consequences of that teaching.

Perhaps it is proper to shake from our theoretical ankles the chains of spacetime. Space and time coordinates derive their convenience from graphic considerations. The theory of space and time is a cultural artifact. If we had invented the digital computer before inventing graph paper, we might have a very different theory of the universe today.

The remarkable story of Cardan's dialogue with the two sylphs who disagreed about the nature of the universe summarizes the problem well. One of the sylphs believed the world had been created of all eternity. The other sylph expressed a theory closer to Islamic occasionalism: the universe is a world of events. This book you are reading is only an occasion of the book I wrote. Can you be certain that it is identical to all the other copies? The pen I am using to write these words is not necessarily the same pen I was using a minute ago; it may be a new instance, a new occasion of the same pen.

Time and space may be convenient notions for plotting the progress of a locomotive, but they are completely useless for locating information. The apparent exception is the library, but anyone who has tried to find something in a modern library with its flat shelves along vertical walls will revognize the predicament in telling order from disorder in cartesian coordinates.

Modern computer scientists have long recognized that ordering by time and space is the worst possible way to store a lot of data at high speed. In a large computer-based information system, no attempt is made to place related records in sequential physical locations. It is much more convenient to sprinkle the records throughout storage as they arrive, and to construct an algorithm for retrieval based on some type of key word or on "hashing," a procedure where the record index is randomized. Probability serves as the link between something objective, the record location, and something subjective, the request for retrieval.

The synchronicity and coincidences that abound in our lives suggest that the world may be organized like a randomized data base (the multiverse) rather than a sequential library (the four-dimensional universe of conventional physics).

Creatures of the Multiverse

If there is no time dimension as we usually assume there is, the human brain may be traversing events by association. Modern computers retrieve information associatively. The user "evokes" the desired records by using key words, words of power. For example, if he requests the intersection of "microwave" and "headache," he may find twenty articles whose existence in the literature he never suspected. If we live in the associative universe of the

software scientist rather than the sequential universe of the spacetime physicist, then miracles are no longer irrational events. The philosophy we could derive from this line of speculation would be closer to Islamic occasionalism than to the Cartesian or Newtonian universe. And a new theory of information would have to be built. Such a theory might have interesting things to say about communication with the denizens of other physical realities, creatures of the multiverse. It might throw new light on the experience of the UFO abductees.

Should we believe the witnesses who describe their experiences aboard UFOs? As I have pointed out throughout this book, there is no reason to doubt their personal integrity, their sincerity, and their honesty. The words of Dr. Simon about Betty and Barney Hill are still clear after twenty years: "The experience, undoubtedly, was real to them."

Does this mean we should take their recollections literally? I do not think so. These events took place in a reality we simply do not understand yet; they had an impact on a part of the human mind we have not discovered. I believe that the UFO phenomenon is one of the ways through which an alien form of intelligence of incredible complexity is communicating with ussumbolically. There is no indication that it is extraterrestrial. Instead, there is mounting evidence that it has access to psychic processes we have not yet mastered or even researched. In the face of such interaction at the symbolic or mythical level, all the hypnosis sessions and the searches for implants may well be as futile as the questions of the inquisitors to the witches returning from the sabbat and the frantic search for the devil's mark on their bodies.

Until we have much more evidence about the physical nature of the UFO phenomenon, I find myself repelled by the indiscriminate probing of the witnesses' minds by amateur hypnotists who believe strongly their particular theory of extraterrestrial visitation and are eager to obtain confirmation of it at any cost.

These witnesses have had a real, traumatic experience. They are weakened by it and ready to believe any explanation provided to them by someone in authority. Under the highly suggestible state created by hypnosis we can easily convince them of any half-baked interpretation of the phenomenon. This process is unethical and certainly unscientific.

In a few cases (like the Hill episode) when hypnosis was used carefully, under medical supervision, and without leading questions, what was the outcome? We learned nothing useful about extraterrestrial life. But we learned that our current concepts of space and time were wrong; that a larger reality, other dimensions, existed; and that the time had come to challenge our current views about the universe.

Let us speculate even more boldly. The subject invites many troubling, fundamental questions. If energy and information are related, why do we only have one physics, the physics of energy? Where is the physics of information? Is the old theory of magic relevant here? Are the writings of Paracelsus, with his concept of "signatures," a neglected source of inspiration? Until these questions are explored, it may be impossible to address what French physicist Costa de Beauregard calls "the truly fundamental problem," that of the relationship between psyche and matter. Even if we consider only the operational aspects of a piece of information, if someone learns something from it, physical theory dictates that the entropy of the universe must have changed.

These are highly speculative questions. But at a time when we are beginning to suspect that ancient challenges are brought to light by high technology, creative speculation is necessary. Can a path be found toward realities that are not situated on faraway planets, but are right around us, outside our normal consciousness? Is this what happened to abductees like Helen and Kathy, or Travis Walton?

Rather than a physical occurrence inside a spacecraft, did they experience a temporary translation of their consciousness into an altered reality followed by visions of archetypal creatures? Is it possible to promote coincidences and peculiar effects of apparently paranormal nature by creating physical structures shielded from everyday noise and serving as informational singularities?

If the world around us is a world of informational events, the symbolic manifestations that surround UFO reports should be viewed as an important factor. If we regard the physical world as an associative universe of informational events, consciousness is no longer simply a local function in the human brain. Instead, I propose to define consciousness as the process by which informational associations are retrieved and traversed. The illusion of

time and space would be merely a side effect of consciousness as it traverses associations. In such a theory, apparently paranormal phenomena like remote viewing and precognition would be expected, even common, and UFOs would lose much of their bizarre quality. These phenomena would be natural aspects of the reality of human consciousness. I submit that reports of alien "contact" must be studied at this level, even if we are a long, long way from being able to channel our speculations into the formal equations of a new physics.

For many years, UFO phenomena have served as a support for human imagination, a framework for human tragedy, a fabric of human dreams. We react to them in our movies, our poetry, our music, our science fiction. And they react to us. They are not trying to communicate with a few individuals, with any group, with any government. Why should they? The phenomena function like an operational system of symbolic communication at a global level. There is something about the human race with which they interact, and we do not yet know what it is. They are part of the environment, part of the control system for human evolution. But their effects, instead of being just physical, are also felt in our beliefs. They influence what we call our spiritual life. They affect our politics, our history, our culture. They are a feature of our past. Undoubtedly, they are part of our future.

## About the Author

An astrophysicist by training and a computer scientist by profession, Dr. Jacques Vallee was born in France, moved to the United States in 1962, and now lives in California with his wife and two children.

After recieving the Jules Verne prize at age nineteen for his first novel, Vallee published twelve other books, most of them in English. Today these books represent well over a million copies in print.

The author of many articles about high technology, Dr. Vallee first became interested in the subject of UFOs when he witnessed the destruction of tracking tapes of unknown objects at a major observatory. His research into the phenomenon has taken him to many places in the United States and to many countries around the world – from France to Scotland and from Australia to Brazil. He served as the real-life model for the character of the French scientist played by François Truffaut in Steven Spielberg's classic movie Close Encounters of The Third Kind.

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